- **Entertainment / A2-1** INQUIRER exclusive: The prime of Ms Jane Fonda
- **Business / B3-1** With VAT on power: Are we seeing end to clean energy?

- **Sports / A27** Frankie Miñoza likely to give RP Open a miss, again
- **Business / B1** US firm quits China to set up shop in RP
- **Lifestyle / G1** 'Ebolusyon' may trigger a revolution

Cebu prosecutor denies sending death threats

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu City Assistant Prosecutor Mary Ann Castro yesterday denied she was behind the death threats received by the chief of reporters of the Cebu Daily News (CDN), and said she was even praying

CEBU/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

PNP targets local execs in 'jueteng' crackdown

By Mei Magsino-Lubis
PDI S. Luzon Bureau
and Norman Bordadora

ANO BA 'TO, HELLO?

IN TWIN moves purportedly aimed at stamping out illegal gambling, the Philippine National Police placed

PNP/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Monday, May 16, 2005 ★★ 104 pages 11 sections Vol. 20 No. 157 P18 website: www.inq7.net

2 sisters at Customs face charges of graft

Undeclared houses, luxury vehicles bared

By Michelle V. Remo
Business

TWO SISTERS working in the Bureau of Customs are expected to be charged with graft by the Department of Finance this morning after a lifestyle check found that they owned luxury vehicles, houses and lots in posh villages, and other assets way beyond their means.

To be charged in the Office of the Ombudsman are Ana Marie Concepcion-Maglasang, customs operation officer 5 at the Port of Manila in South Harbor, and Matilda Concepcion-Millare, special deputy collector at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"It is quite obvious that the wealth acquired by these two sisters is not commensurate with the money they legally earned," said Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan, head of the Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS).

"We certainly want them dismissed from their jobs and barred from government service."

With today's filing of charges against the sisters, the DOF is relaunching RIPS, the unit tasked with conducting lifestyle checks on and filing graft charges against officials and employees of agencies under the department.

Under the program, the DOF intends to file charges every two weeks against corrupt government officials and employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs and other attached agencies.

"This time, we will be more aggressive in going after corrupt of-

2 SISTERS/ A6

HIGH-RISE DWELLING
A man tries to keep his homemade "Flying House" up in the air during the final leg of a kite-flying festival at Rizal Park in Manila yesterday. A record 695 kites were registered, of which 346 successfully flew. ERIK ARAZAS

RP rejects comparison with Argentina on debt

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday bristled at the reported statements of a Moody's Investors Service analyst who likened the Philippine economy to that of Argentina.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said much of the country's debt was in long-term obligations while government revenues were expected to grow to new tax measures.

These two factors "help ensure that the Philippines will be able to honor its international obligations and should not be compared with Argentina," Purisima said in a statement.

Moody's cut the Philippines' sovereign ratings by two notches in February to four rungs below investment-grade, citing a damaging buildup of public debt. Congress has since passed long-delayed amendments to the value-added tax (VAT).

The finance department insisted that comparing the economies of the Philippines and Argentina was "much like comparing apples with oranges."

RP REJECTS/ A21

Ex-envoy warns on 'jueteng' laundering

By Christian V. Esguerra and Michael Lim Ubac

A MONEY laundering operation by "jueteng" lords using the dollar remittances of overseas Filipino workers will kill the economy unless it is immediately stopped, a top supporter of OFWs warned yesterday.

Former Ambassador Roy Señeres, head of the 350,000-strong OFW Family Club, called on the government to crack the whip on jueteng operators once and for all before the country's economy crashes.

Señeres, chair of the National Labor Relations Commission, was in the news recently when President Macapagal-Arroyo suspected that he was involved in efforts to undermine her administration.

Ms Arroyo's suspicions were prompted by Señeres' reported meetings with some US Embassy officials purportedly to ask for US support in ousting her—an accusation Señeres denied.

Señeres was reacting to an INQUIRER report about how jueteng operators laundered their ill-gained gambling collections through foreign banks abroad using OFW remittances.

Under the scheme, according to an INQUIRER source, point men working for jueteng operators contact the OFWs, offering to facilitate their cash remittances to their families in the Philippines.

They then stash the remittances in foreign banks while the jueteng operators in the Philippines deliver their peso equivalent to the OFW families.

In effect, this has enabled jueteng lords to convert their collections into foreign currencies and elude local investigation, the INQUIRER learned.

A number of OFWs based in the Middle East and Italy have reportedly been attracted by the scheme, which saves them from having to pay the regular transaction fees when remitting through the banking system.

"Our country is the sick man of Asia but continues to survive because of OFW remittances," Señeres, former ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and labor attache to the Middle East,

EX-ENVOY/ A6

LUNA AWARD WINNERS RUDY ESPERAS
Dennis Trillo and Claudine Barretto are the Best Actor and Best Actress, respectively, during the Film Academy of the Philippines' Luna Awards night Saturday. *(Story on Page A23.)*

NEW PACIFIC WAR

'Bankruptcy disguised as illiquidity'

By Alcuin Papa

(Second of three parts)

SPECIAL REPORT
Project Editor: **Leah Makabenta**

THE MULTIPLE transfer of assets and companies that Pacific Plans Inc. set into motion in June 2004 was meant to shield the firm's assets from any claims by its creditors once the rehabilitation was approved, said plan holders who had organized themselves into the Parents Enabling Parents Coalition (PEP Coalition).

It was a "premeditated" move to "mutilate" the company to "escape from paying [its] obligations to plan holders," said PEP president Philip Piccio.

All fixed-value plans were transferred to Lifetime Plans, leaving the 34,000 problematic traditional or open-ended plans with PPI, according to Piccio.

By PEP's reckoning, Lifetime became the owner of 400,000 fixed-value plans and trust fund assets of P8.7 billion. Piccio described the sale as a simple "assets against liabilities" transfer, meaning the sale was not for real."

"They cut up the assets of PPI and distributed [them] to other companies so creditors and plan holders will not be able to claim [them] ... The objective was to get these assets which belonged to PPI as far away as possible from the company before they rehabilitate," he said.

An industry source wondered whether this was not, in fact, a

BANKRUPTCY/ A22

New VAT bill: All talk, no action

NO MATTER what spin the government tries to put on the recently approved value-added tax bill, analysts will still harbor serious doubts the revenue measure will do much to solve the country's chronic fiscal deficit and debt problems.

Analysts say the fact the government had to raise $750 million in the international markets recently to help bridge this year's $3.3-billion budget deficit shows there is no clear policy to bring down debt.

Instead of increasing the value-added tax on goods and services to 12 percent from 10 percent as envisioned by the government to boost revenues, Congress has approved a bill that will keep the VAT at 10 percent but increase corporate income tax from 32 percent to 35 percent.

Lawmakers have given President Macapagal-Arroyo the authority to raise the VAT to 12 percent in January 2006 under certain conditions and remove exemptions enjoyed by certain industries. Under this setup, however, the President—not the lawmakers—will have to take the political flak for what is sure to be a very unpopular move.

At the same time, no one really

NEW VAT/ A21

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will be cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming more frequent over Eastern section of Mindanao. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY: MICHAEL R. CUCIO, PDI RESEARCH/05/16/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with rains
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with rains
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with rains
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with rains
Clark Zone	Partly cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with rains
Tagaytay	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with rains
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rains
Calapan	Cloudy with rains	Davao	Cloudy with rains

Unicef raps child-trafficking in RP

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

POVERTY is not an excuse to exploit your children.

This was the assertion of a United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) official to parents as he expressed alarm over the seemingly unchecked problem of child-trafficking in the Philippines.

"We realize there is a situation of poverty [in the country]," Unicef senior program officer Colin Davis said during an international conference on children's rights.

"But we must reach out to parents and tell them that even if you are poor, that is not an excuse to have your children trafficked or to allow them to fall into pornography," Davis said.

If not being forced into prostitution, children are made to pose nude for pornographic materials or Web sites.

"Parents think that by taking photographs of their children naked, they are not harming them. But they are taking away their childhood," Davis said.

He said child-trafficking was one of the three biggest problems affecting Filipino children, the others being malnutrition and lack of education.

Child-trafficking in the Philippines is as bad as in Thailand and Cambodia, he said.

"Children are being trafficked from provinces to cities, from cities to overseas. This is not something we can just stand back from and ignore," he said.

In a report, Unicef said one of every three children or women forced into prostitution were in—or came from—Asia.

Unicef presented the report during the Regional Conference of National Bodies and Lead Government Agencies for Children in Asia and the Pacific held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City on Friday.

The three-day conference was aimed at establishing Asia-Pacific Childnet, an information network.

The network would facilitate the exchange of experiences, ideas and policies for the protection of children's rights between member-countries.

The network shall also monitor the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations (UN-CRC) in 1989.

To achieve this, the group plans to set up a Web site where member-countries can upload their laws, ideas, policies and experiences on children's rights.

This would also facilitate regular communication between countries.

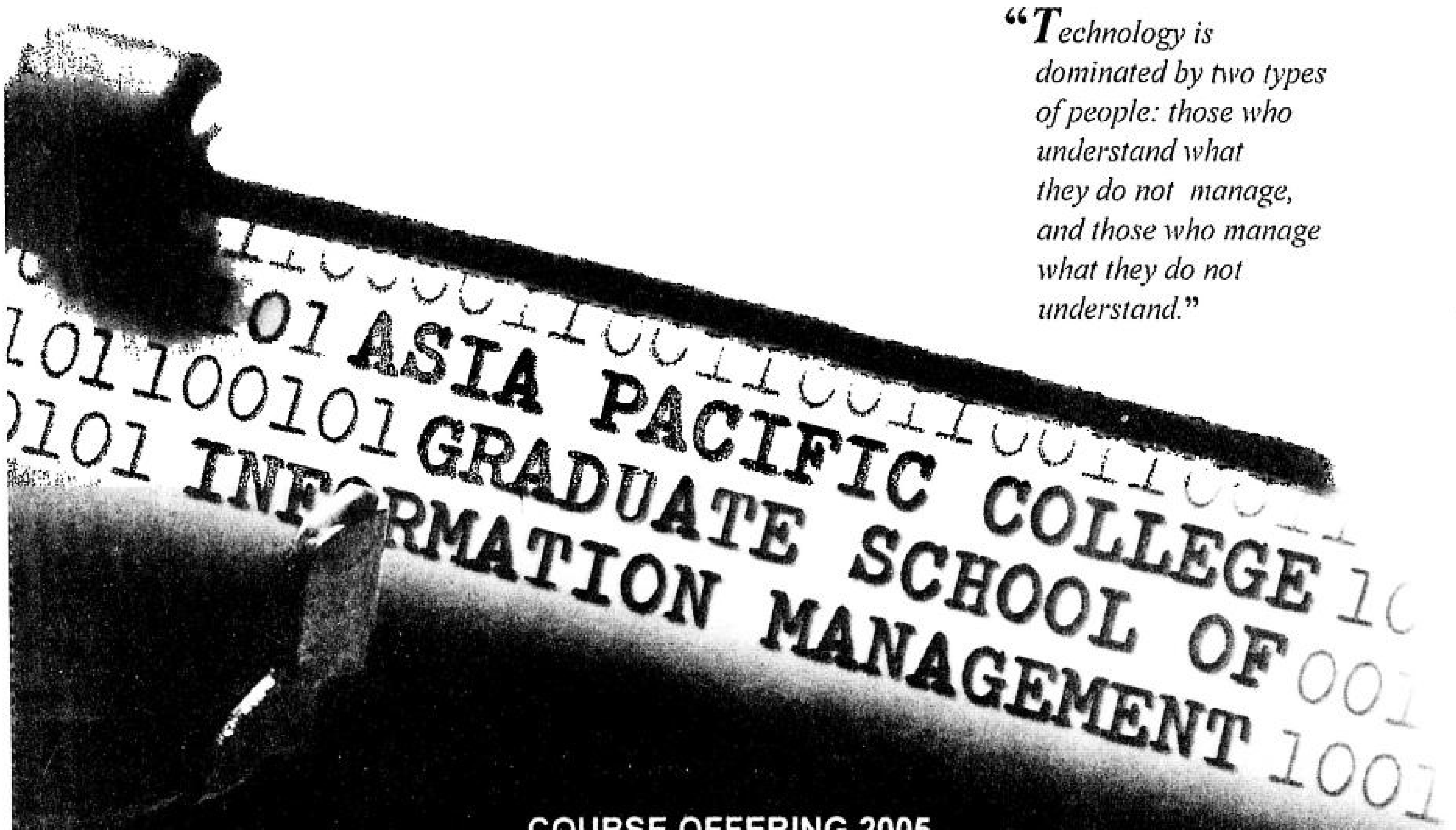
There shall also be a regular conference every two years with Thailand offering to be the next host country.

Davis said Childnet could help solve the problem of child-trafficking in Asia.

Philippine Council for the Welfare of Children director Lina Laigo said, "The network will strengthen national bodies in implementing children's rights."

So what can the Philippines, itself confronted by rampant violations of children's rights, contribute to the network?

Laigo said the country could share its experience in setting up a council to coordinate the various agencies promoting children's rights.



"*Technology is dominated by two types of people: those who understand what they do not manage, and those who manage what they do not understand.*"

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Social reform next on GMA agenda—Bunye

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is preparing to undertake the second phase of her reform program which includes implementing a "cohesive social agenda to end violence," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

The anticrime summit that opened last Saturday was apparently part of those reforms.

In his weekly Web site column, "View from the Palace," Bunye said the second phase of reforms that the President is set to undertake comes after she succeeded in getting fiscal reform measures from Congress, the first phase of her agenda.

"With the passage of the VAT measure and, prior to that, the indexation of taxes on alcohol and tobacco and the Lateral Attrition Law, the President is prepared to embark on the social phase of reforms, which includes a social agenda to end violence, promote children's nutrition, strengthen and expand microfinance, while seeking new investments that would lead to decent [jobs] for all," Bunye said.

In a statement he issued yesterday, Bunye said Malacañang was confident that representatives to the anticrime summit would be able to come up with "effective measures for safer homes and streets, while we also address the vital issues of good governance."

"A stable peace and order situation is indispensable for both our political and economic security," he said.

Bunye stressed that curbing the culture of violence was "just as important as fighting the culture of corruption."

At the start of the anticrime summit, Ms Arroyo asked the people to help stem the rising crime rate and called for tougher laws on gun control, as well as an end to the "culture of violence" that she said was being promoted in the mass media.

Bunye said over RMN radio yesterday that gun control was among the suggestions made during the summit.

This came about, he said, after summit participants discussed why the wheels of justice ground slowly, prompting some people to "take the law into their own hands."

Summit participants also looked into the lack of judges and prosecutors, Bunye said.

"This (inability to attract judges and prosecutors) is the reason there is a big backlog of cases, especially criminal ones," he said.

New voters list-up resumes in Luzon

AFTER securing its long-delayed budget for this year, the Commission on Elections resumes today the nationwide registration of first-time voters, beginning with Luzon.

Comelec information and education director Milagros Desamito called on those eligible to vote to file their applications at the Office of the Election Officer in the their cities or municipalities from Monday to Friday during office hours.

Applicants are requested to bring any identifying document with their photograph and signature on it such as a driver's license, current employee ID, student ID, NBI or police clearance, postal ID, SSS or GSIS ID, senior citizen's ID, passport or any authentic document that shows their identity.

Registration shall go on until Dec. 31, 2006.

Registration in Region IV-B and the rest of the Visayas will start on June 13. Registration in Mindanao will resume on July 11.

Registration in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the 5th District c Cebu were temporarily suspended due to the coming regional and special congressional elections there. *Jerome Aning*

Gloria grants 21 death cons 90-day reprieve

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has granted a 90-day reprieve to 21 convicts awaiting execution by lethal injection.

The 21 convicts, whose crimes ranged from rape, murder, kidnapping for ransom to drug-trafficking, were originally scheduled for execution in April and May.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, in an April 21 letter to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, conveyed the President's endorsement of a stay in the execution of the 21 death row inmates.

Among those whose executions have been delayed are Rolando Pagdayawon, who was sentenced to death for raping his daughter in 1996, and Eddie Sernadilla, who was found guilty of raping a 6-year-old girl in 1997.

Several of the death row convicts would have been executed years ago had they not won reprieves from Ms Arroyo, who became president in January 2001. The stays are usually given for 90 days, then extended before the period's lapse.

The issue of capital punishment is a divisive one in predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines.

Two years ago, Ms Arroyo lifted a three-year moratorium on executions for convicted kidnappers and drug lords as an anti-crime measure, drawing protests from the influential Roman Catholic Church and the European Union.

But no one has been executed under her term so far. In March, she practically ruled out executions under her administration, saying they would happen only when "absolutely required by the times."

Ms Arroyo noted then that even without the execution of death convicts, the police had managed to check the incidence of kidnappings and stem the drug problem in the country.

The Philippines has a history of invoking and suspending the death penalty.

It was abolished in 1987, but reinstated in 1994 for "heinous" crimes such as rape, kidnapping, murder and drug-trafficking.

Opposition from human rights groups held up executions until 1999. Since then, seven people had been put to death, most for rape and murder. The last execution took place in January 2000.

AP

Scientists to field bets in 2007 polls

By Blanche S. Rivera

IF YOU can't beat them, join them.

And so the country's scientists have decided to join the complex world of politics, beginning with the House of Representatives.

Former Science Undersecretary Florentino Tesoro said he and a group of scientists have formed a party-list group called Agham to field candidates in the 2007 elections.

The late former director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), Raymundo Punongbayan, would have been Agham's first congressional bet, Tesoro said.

Speaking at the tribute for the victims of the recent helicopter crash that claimed the lives of Punongbayan and four Phivolcs scientists, Tesoro said Agham has been registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The new party-list group has a pending application for accreditation with the Commission on Elections, he said. The party-list system allows for marginalized sectors of society to be represented in government.

"We saw how difficult it was to get a budget and raise funds for science and technology, so we thought we should have scientists in Congress," said Tesoro, addressing the colleagues and families of the late Phivolcs scientists.

Punongbayan and the four scientists were conducting an aerial survey of Aurora and Nueva Ecija on April 28 when the Air Force Huey helicopter they were riding in crashed.

Scientists from the United States and Japan, along with top Philippine government officials, attended the tribute to the five men.

Tesoro said Punongbayan, who had been asked by former President Corazon Aquino to join her senatorial ticket but declined, changed his mind when other scientists asked him to represent them in Congress.

"Amazingly, he agreed to be our candidate in 2007," said Tesoro, recalling how Punongbayan, whose name became a household word after the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption, recognized the plight of Filipino scientists.

"We promise to pursue this. We're looking for a replacement [candidate] now," he said.

He also urged the Department of Science and Technology to set aside a fund for the families of scientists who die in the line of duty.

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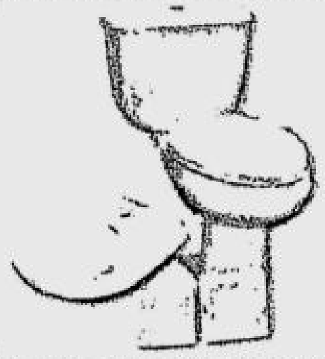

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PNP officer links journalists to gambling lords

By Ferdinand O. Zuasola
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MATI, Davao Oriental—Now, the shoe is on the other foot.

Striking back after accusations in media that some policemen were protecting illegal gambling, Senior Supt. Bienvenido Latag yesterday accused media practitioners here of being the ones conniving with gambling lords.

"Media men are in cahoots with illegal gambling operators. They help gambling lords in discrediting the police, especially when raids are conducted," the provincial police director said in an interview.

He did not name any journalists, however.

But Latag said these journalists would always criticize the police's anti-gambling operations as nothing but an extortion activity.

Fearless gambling lords

On some occasions, he said, these media people would interview financiers of gambling operations and give them a forum to discredit the government's anti-gambling campaign.

Latag stopped short of saying that journalists supposedly in cahoots with illegal gambling operators were receiving payola.

"That is the reason they [the gambling financiers] have no fear—because of the support they get from some mediamen," Latag said.

Once a financier gets arrested, he runs to his friends in the media and they then criticize the police, alleging that the reason he was arrested was not because the police were doing their job but because they had not received their payoffs, he said.

Latag challenged

Raul Antupuesto, provincial chair of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas (KBP), said Latag should identify the journalists who were allegedly acting as protectors of illegal numbers games, such as Last Two Digits.

The digits game is a form of gambling where people bet on the last digits of the last two balls drawn in a lotto lottery.

Antupuesto asserted that Latag was trying to cast doubts on the integrity of the local media because of criticism that police officials were using their supposed anti-gambling drive to squeeze money from gambling operators.

"We met with operators of Last Two Digits in Davao Oriental and they all said they had to cut down the prizes because the local police were asking hefty amounts from them," he said.

Antupuesto said gambling operators alleged that police officials wanted P10,000 daily in payola.

As a result, the amount of prizes given to winning bettors allegedly had to be reduced.

From P700 for a P10 bet, gambling operators now only give P500 to P600 to the bettor.

"And it's all because of the extortion activities of the corrupt local officials of the Philippine National Police who make Last Two Digits operators here their milking cows," Antupuesto said.

Charges are old

Latag denied the allegations as nothing new and said such attacks would not deter the police from pursuing illegal gambling operators.

"The [police] are not asking any payola from the local gambling lords. All we are asking is for them to stop their operations," he said.

Cebu prosecutor denies sending death threats

From page A1

for the journalist's safety.

Suzzane Salva, CDN's court reporter for seven years and who prosecutors had planned to utilize as a witness in a court case against Castro, received at least six death threats through text messages last week.

Castro stressed that she would not threaten Salva because she respected her as a human being.

"I pray for her, and rest assured that insofar as I am concerned ... no, I will not do that because you are human. And human as she is, she should be respected," Castro said partly in Cebuano.

Castro did not hide her dismay over what she said was the absence of fairness in the coverage of CDN and Sun*Star Cebu of her cases.

She maintained the two newspapers had not been fair in their reportage because they supposedly made it appear that their reporters had interviewed her when they had not.

Castro said she had always been accessible to reporters and appealed to the local media community to stop portraying her as a "*kontrabida* (villain)."

CDN publisher Eileen G. Mangubat, in a letter asking for police protection for Salva, said CDN editors suspected the death threats "are work-related."

Suspension order

The charge against Castro stemmed from her alleged receipt of P10,000 from a lawyer involved in a drug-dealing case she was prosecuting.

Salva had been set to testify during the trial at the Sandiganbayan last week but government prosecutors opted not to call her to the witness stand.

The Sandiganbayan had ordered Castro suspended for 90 days, but the preventive suspension order has yet to be implemented by the Department of Justice.

Fighting the suspension order

The failure of the DOJ to implement the suspension order was the subject of one of Salva's last articles before she received the threatening messages between May 7 and 8.

Castro stressed that she had not yet been suspended. She said she had taken a leave of absence from May 12 to June 1 to prepare her petition before the Supreme Court to stop the suspension order.

Press Freedom Fund set up

MALACAÑANG is setting up a P5-million Press Freedom Fund to help authorities solve the spate of killings of journalists and prevent further attacks on media people.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said the Office of the President would provide P3 million while P2 million would come from the office of Speaker Jose de Venecia.

"Two million of that will be used ... as reward for informers who could help in solving cases and another one million will be used for the witness protection program," Bunye said on RMN radio.

The rest of the fund will be used for a "quick reaction team" which will respond immediately to cases involving attacks on members of the media.

The fund will be launched today. *Christine O. Avendaño*

PNP targets local execs . . .

From page A1

"jueteng" lords in its "order of battle" and urged that governors and mayors in their pay be sacked.

For starters, the PNP wants to know who is the jueteng lord in Southern Tagalog who supposedly goes by the name of "Taba" (Fatso).

The so-called PNP Order of Battle is a list of targets of police operations. In the past, the targets had included rebel leaders and followers.

Seemingly wanting to prove it now means business, the PNP regional office in Camp Vicente Lim, Laguna, has asked the local police chiefs in its area to identify the gambling lords known only by their aliases.

"It's really funny because the regional director wants to know if a certain Sanchez and Taba live in our area of responsibility," a high-ranking police officer said yesterday.

Where the fat man is

"[The regional office] also wants the chief of police in every town and city to identify them and put it in black and white," the officer, asking for anonymity, told the INQUIRER.

He added that he was tempted to send an answer to the regional office to look for Sanchez or Taba in Sto. Tomas town, Batangas, where Taba lives.

"But of course, I didn't send that letter because I know that there is a Senate committee hearing on jueteng and that paper could be used against me," the police officer added.

Unchecked in Batangas

Jueteng, the controversial illegal numbers game which played a key role in the overthrow of then President Joseph Estrada, is still going on in Batangas despite denials by provincial officials, a monitoring group said.

According to an investigation conducted by the Konseho ng Mamamayan Laban sa Jueteng at mga Ilegal na Pasugalan (Komalaban), an advocacy group, the estimated income from jueteng in the province amounts to P74.8 million a month.

At Camp Crame, PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao has recommended the inclusion of involved local government officials in the renewed crackdown on jueteng.

3-strike rule

In a report to Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, Lomibao said the "three-strike rule" applied to chiefs of PNP units at the local levels should also be imposed on local officials, including mayors and governors.

"Perhaps, the local officials can be suspended once the national police is able to conduct jueteng raids in their areas at least three times," said a police source, who showed the INQUIRER a copy of the report prepared by the PNP's anti-jueteng task force spearheaded by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

The "three-strike rule" calls for the relief of the police chief of an area where there has been three police raids on illegal gambling.

Not us, but them

Lomibao claimed in the PNP report that unscrupulous local executives were the ones hampering the campaign against the illegal numbers game.

He described the mayors and governors who allegedly protect or tolerate jueteng as "noncoöperative," even "hostile."

"Unsupportive local officials really impede local PNP units in accomplishing their mission, taking into consideration the provisions of ... RA 8551 granting [local officials] certain powers ... over PNP units," Lomibao said in the report.

No more jueteng?

Nonetheless, the PNP's anti-jueteng campaign has resulted in the cessation of the illegal numbers game all over the country, except in Pangasinan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Quezon and Rizal, where "guerrilla" jueteng operations continue to be monitored, Lomibao claimed.

The areas where jueteng has supposedly been stopped, according to the Lomibao report, include Isabela, whose mayors have been accused by Gov. Maria Gracia Padaca of benefiting from jueteng.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, May 16, 2005
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Sir 1:1-10
Gospel: Mark 9:14-29

When Jesus came down the mountain with Peter, James and John to the place where they had left the disciples, they saw many people around and some teachers of the Law arguing with them. When the people saw Jesus, they were astonished and ran to greet him.

He asked, "What are you arguing about with them?" A man answered him from the crowd, "Master, I brought my son to you for he has a dumb spirit. Whenever the spirit seizes him, it throws him down and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth and becomes stiff all over. I asked your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they could not."

Jesus replied, "You faithless people. How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him.

As soon as the spirit saw Jesus, it shook and convulsed the boy who fell on the ground and began rolling about, foaming at the mouth. Then Jesus asked the father, "How long has this been happening to him?" He replied, "From childhood. And it has often thrown him into the fire and into the water to destroy him. If you can do anything, have pity on us and help us."

Jesus said to him, "Why do you say: 'If you can?' All things are possible for one who believes." Immediately the father of the boy cried out, "I do believe, but help the little faith I have."

Jesus saw that the crowd was increasing rapidly, so he ordered the evil spirit, "Dumb and deaf spirit, I command you: Leave the boy and never enter him again." The evil spirit shook and convulsed the boy and with a terrible shriek came out. The boy lay like a corpse and people said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him and the boy stood up.

After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive out the spirit?" And he answered, "Only prayer can drive out this kind, nothing else."

Commentary

We return now to Mark's Good News and begin Ordinary Time, almost six months until Advent returns. It is time to practice all the extraordinary things that we have experienced as the Body of Christ and to be disciples for the world to see. A man comes with a boy who is so afflicted with a spirit that makes him dumb, yet his disciples cannot cure him. Just the sight of Jesus shakes the boy into convulsions. And the man asks Jesus to cure him, 'if he can'—Jesus responds that "All things are possible for one who believes." The father is desperate and cries out: "I do believe, but help the little faith that I have." Jesus commands the dumb spirit to leave him, and lifts the boy by the hand and raises him up. The disciples question Jesus and find out that only prayer—Jesus' prayer, can drive out some spirits. It is time for us now, to pray, to drive out what is evil, to believe and to ask Jesus to help what little faith we have.

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Seniors enjoy 5% off on goods

SENIOR citizens nationwide may now enjoy a five percent discount on their purchases of basic commodities from retail stores, groceries and supermarkets to enable them to cope with the rising prices of goods.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman said the special discount is provided for under Republic Act No. 9257 or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003.

The Department of Trade and Industry has published the guidelines and the implementing rules and regulations for the special discount.

Soliman said the special discount was available beginning May 12.

Covered by the discount are prime commodities such as canned sardines, tuna, evaporated, condensed and powdered filled milk, coffee, bread, white and brown sugar, cooking oil, instant noodles, luncheon meat, meat loaf, corned beef, frozen, refrigerated or preserved ready-to-cook pork, beef and chicken, and powdered and liquid bar laundry and detergent soap.

She said goods bought from sari-sari stores, wet markets, *talipapas* and cooperative stores are not covered by the discount.

The total amount of senior citizen purchases, however, should not exceed P650 per week, with the unused amount not being carried over.

To avail of the discount, a senior citizen must present his/her identification card issued by the Office of Senior Citizens Affairs in his/her locality.

A purchase booklet, similar to the medicine booklet, will be given out by the OSCA.

Senior citizens who cannot personally purchase the basic necessities should give a written authority to a representative to make the purchases on his/her behalf. *Cynthia D. Balana*

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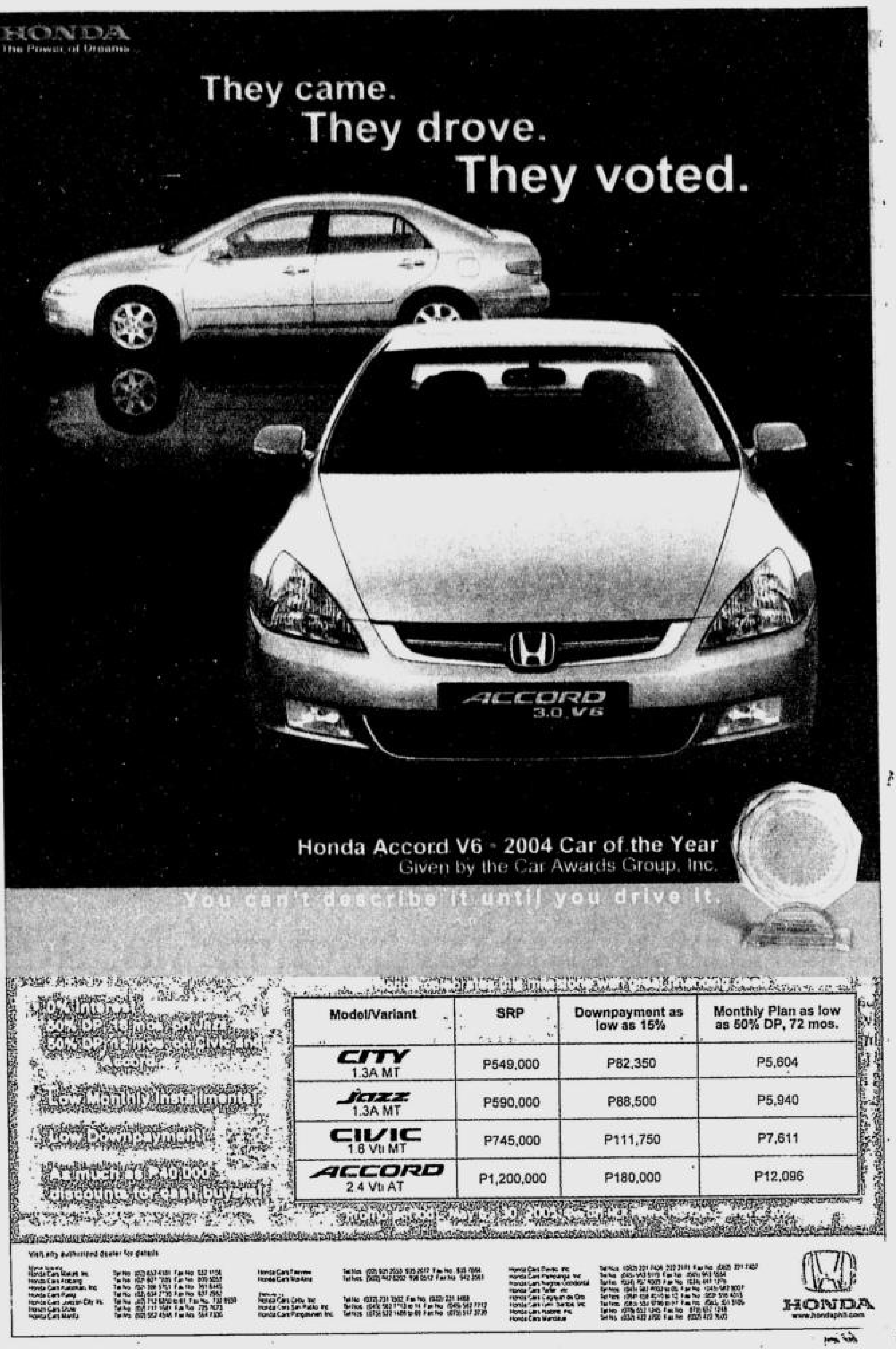
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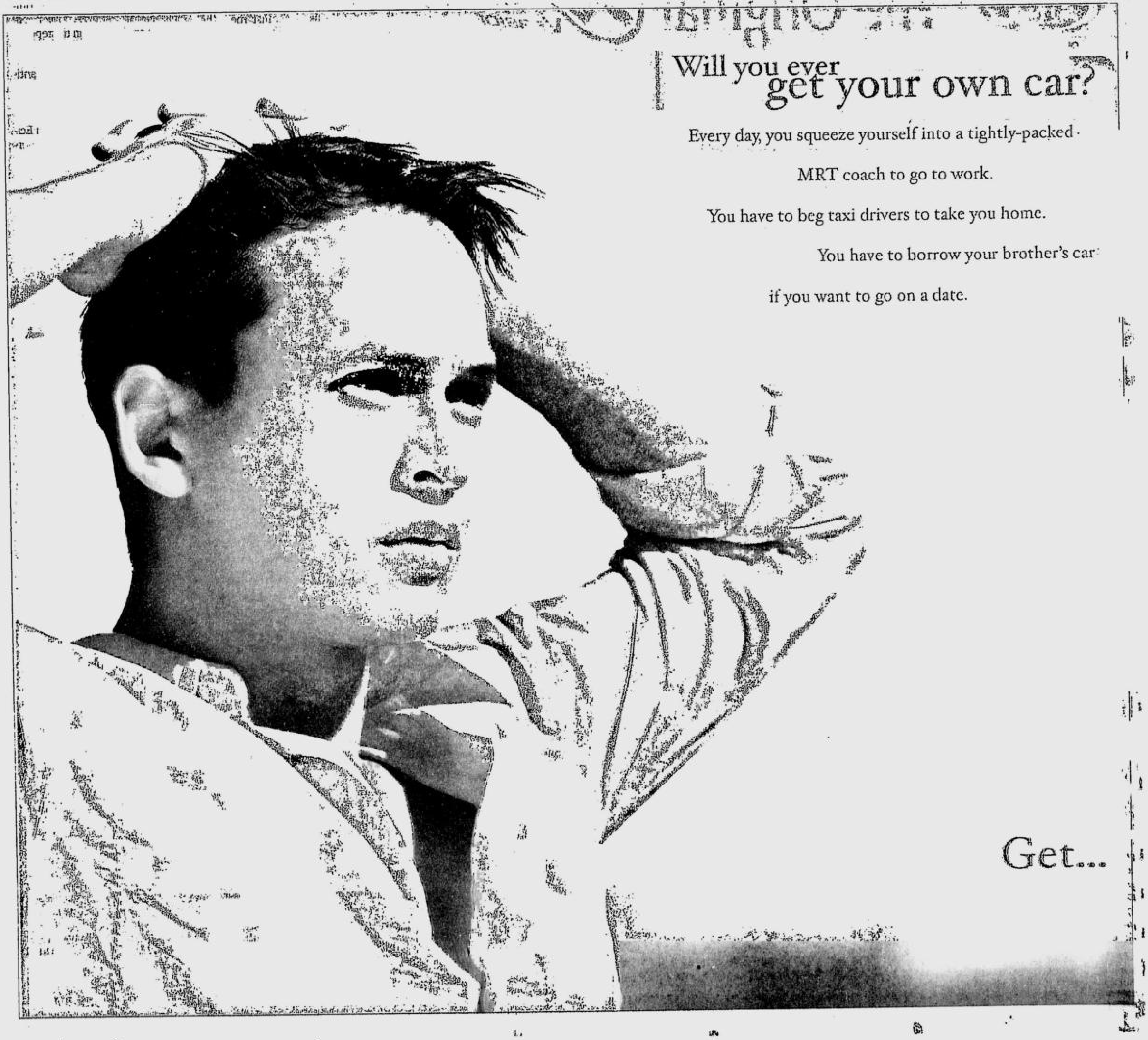
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2 sisters at Customs face charges of graft

From page A1

ficials and employees within our ranks. This is significant, considering the fact that the BIR and the BOC jointly account for 90 percent of the national government's annual revenues," Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said in a statement.

Houses and SUVs

The DOF found that Maglasang owned a house and lot at Filinvest East Subdivision in Cainta, Rizal; a house and lot at Sierra Monte Mansions, also at Filinvest East; adjoining houses and lots at Town and Country Executive Village, also in Cainta, and a two-story mansion at Royal Tagaytay Estates in Alfonso, Cavite.

She also allegedly owned several luxury vehicles, including a Ford Expedition, a Mitsubishi Pajero and a Mazda MPV.

Maglasang receives an annual salary of P218,928, or a little over P18,000 a month, according to RIPS. When she first joined the BOC in 1989 as a customs examiner, her annual salary was P35,508.

According to the complaint, Maglasang failed to file her statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) from 1998 to 2000.

In the years she filed her SALN, she declared only one piece of real estate—a house in Antipolo City worth P4 million. It was acquired in 1996.

Her sister, Matilda Concepcion-Millare, also owns several pieces of real estate and luxury vehicles, according to the DOF.

Speedboat

These include a house and lot in Cubao, Quezon City; agricultural lots in Zambales and Sorsogon, and a posh house at Valle Verde subdivision in Pasig City. The vehicles include a Mitsubishi Pajero, Toyota RAV-4, Honda Civic, Nissan Exalta, Honda CR-V, a speedboat, trucks and vans.

Millare earns an annual salary of P249,876, or almost P21,000 a month. She earned an annual salary of P6,240 when she first joined the BOC as a senior storekeeper in 1989.

The RIPS said some of the assets were not declared in Millare's SALNs, including the 2002 Mitsubishi Pajero and the 2004 Toyota RAV-4, which are worth more than P1 million each.

The other assets were declared in her SALNs, but her explanation of how she acquired them was doubtful, it said.

Liabilities overstated

Millare consistently declared the same liabilities in her SALNs from 1994 to 2003—a loan of P500,000 from Bank of the Philippine Islands, a loan of P370,000 from GSIS . Family Bank, a loan of P1.3 million from I-Bank, and two loans amounting to 4.15 million from Citystate Savings Bank, the RIPS said.

It noted that the liabilities Millare had declared did not diminish over the years. The RIPS alleged that Millare had been declaring the same liabilities over and over in her SALNs to fraudulently justify her assets and thus hide her true net worth.

"It appears, therefore, that most, if not all, of her declared liabilities in her SALNs are doubtful in nature," the complaint said. "[B]y blatantly and deliberately overstating her liabilities, [Millare] was able to reduce her real net worth and consequently dilute or hide the excessiveness of her unexplained wealth."

The RIPS said the spouses of Maglasang and Millare did not have income tax payment records.

Tipsters

Bonoan said his office first learned about the lifestyles of the Concepcion sisters through tips from their colleagues in the BOC.

"Some people in these agencies are sick and tired of corrupt [people] working in these offices," the finance undersecretary said.

Bonoan said the RIPS managed to complete its lifestyle checks by coordinating with other government agencies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, Land Transportation Office and the Land Registration Authority for records from which assets of suspects can be traced.

The initial lifestyle checks conducted by the RIPS, created on Dec. 17, 2003 by executive order, led to the prosecution of a BIR assistant commissioner and a customs deputy commissioner, among other people.

Purisima said the regular filing of corruption charges against erring government employees and officials was aimed at complementing the latest crackdown on tax evaders under the RATE (Run After Tax Evaders) program.

Under RATE, the DOF, together with the BIR, files tax evasion charges against suspects once a week.

2-pronged approach

Purisima said RATE and the relaunching of RIPS were aimed at having a two-pronged approach against the culture of dishonesty in the private sector and the government.

Under RATE, entertainment celebrities Richard Gomez and Regine Velasquez, television host and fitness expert Cristina Juan, basketball star Asi Taulava and the College Assurance Plan's top executives have been charged with tax evasion in the Department of Justice.

But Bonoan said the filing of charges under RIPS would be done only once every two weeks, unlike the weekly filing under the RATE, because corruption was relatively more difficult to detect than tax evasion.

Before its relaunching, the RIPS filed charges in the Office of the Ombudsman against 14 government officials and employees. They included former BIR Assistant Commissioner Edwin R. Abella, former BIR Regional Director Kamil L. Bajunaid, BIR collection officers Joel Cortez and Diodoro Gatela, BOC employees Edgardo Roque Galang and Alberta J. Iglesias, BIR Revenue Officer IV Jaime G. Marzan, BIR Revenue District Officer Aguinaldo Miravalles, Assistant Commissioner Percival T. Salazar, BIR Revenue District Officer Godofredo San Jose, BIR Revenue District Officer Lucien E. Sayuno, BIR Revenue Officers Cesar and Elena Simpao (spouses), BOC Chief Operating Officer V Manuel P. Valencia, BIR Revenue District Officer Beltran Dy and Pasay City Treasurer Concepcion Daplas.

Abella, Bajunaid, Iglesias and Valencia were dismissed from their jobs, while the rest are either being investigated by the Ombudsman or have been suspended from work.

London-based Transparency International ranked the Philippines at 11th place in its global corruption index for the second consecutive year in 2004.

Many managers in the country said most firms set aside about 22 percent of the cost of government contracts to pay for bribes, according to results of a survey conducted by Social Weather Stations last year.

Ex-envoy warns on 'jueteng' laundering

From page A1

told the INQUIRER.

"But with this new scheme, these stupid jueteng lords are killing the only lifeblood of our economy."

He said that if the new scheme became popular among OFWs, the amount of dollar remittances from them which the economy badly needs would drastically go down.

"The importance of dollars coming in is very simple," Señeres said. "It works on the principle that the expense of one is the income of another."

Huge dollar loss

Unless the new racket is stopped, Señeres feared the annual OFW remittances, estimated at $8 billion a year, would suffer a huge drop.

"Just imagine each of the seven million OFWs remitting $1 a day," he said. "What if the money never comes in because of these jueteng lords?"

Señeres said the scheme was not actually difficult to stop if the Arroyo administration would seriously run after the jueteng lords and jail them.

"Government officials should not have been befriending those despicable jueteng lords," he said. "Somebody has got to take charge."

Strong response needed

Señeres conceded that rooting out jueteng operations was a tall order because of the protection gambling lords receive from law enforcers and politicians.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, head of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, has criticized Ms Arroyo for her alleged lack of firmness in dealing with the jueteng menace.

"If the President could not stop a plain illegal numbers game, if she could not permanently put an end to jueteng in the country with all her authority and power," he said, "then people should not be blamed for their progressively emerging disrespect toward the highest office in the land."

But eliminating jueteng and the new money laundering system is not solely the government's responsibility, Señeres said.

Sense of patriotism

Appealing to the OFWs' "sense of patriotism," he urged them not to patronize the system devised by the jueteng operators, however attractive it might be.

"I appeal to them to police their own ranks and encourage their peers to remit through authorized banking channels," he said.

Señeres is to meet with members of the OFW Family Club to discuss the new jueteng racket. He says his group has at least 350,000 members based in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the United States.

Businessmen also involved

Besides jueteng lords, many unscrupulous businessmen have also been engaged in illegal schemes involving the remittances of OFWs, lawmakers said.

Rep. Joel Almario, (Lakas-CMD, Davao Oriental) chair of the House committee on games and amusements confirmed that the OFW remittance racket was a "thriving informal sector," but did not say if Congress could enact laws that would put a stop to it.

He said the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) was in the best position to "do something to stop the involvement of jueteng lords in the remittance system."

Almario said the illegal practice had been going on for years and that it was not only OFWs or jueteng lords doing it.

"A lot of Filipinos do it. Whether they are OFWs or not, whether through jueteng operators or not," he said.

Blame it on banks?

But he conceded that the illegal remittance scheme was reflective of how bad the country's banking system was in handling remittances from abroad.

"Banks impose a holding period and require a minimum amount of remittance. Also, banks have business hours while informal remittance operators offer a 24-hour service, seven days a week. These factors encourage Filipinos abroad to use the informal sector," he said.

Considering the banks' costly charges, Filipinos would rather employ the door-to-door services being exploited by jueteng lords, Almario said.

Not OFWs' fault

Because of the alleged involvement of jueteng lords in the remittance system, Almario said the AMLC should establish a system to pinpoint their operations and detect dirty money in the banking system.

"While this may need a strengthening of our anti-money laundering law, the more important thing is still the law's effective implementation," he said.

To stop the involvement of jueteng lords in the remittance system, the government should allow only accredited remittance agencies to conduct business with OFWs, and likewise provide a list of these agencies to the OFWs.

Coming to the defense of the OFWs, the militant Migrante group said Filipinos who may have unwittingly used a jueteng lord's network to remit money home might have done so out of a desire to save their hard-earned cash.

Migrante said the transfer fees banks and private companies charge were a burden on the workers, forcing them to turn to alternative channels that offered free services.

"The OFWs are not to be blamed for unwittingly helping jueteng operations in the country because they are not aware that they are dealing with such people," said Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado. *With a report from Leila B. Salaverria* .

Isabela solon dares Padaca: Name names

CAUAYAN CITY—Isabela Rep. Faustino Dy III has dared Gov. Maria Gracia Padaca to name the mayors and policemen she claimed were benefiting from "jueteng" operations in the province.

Dy, younger brother of former Gov. Faustino Dy Jr., said that by identifying these officials, Padaca would be absolving other mayors and police officials who were not involved in jueteng payoffs.

"There must be a reason why she made that [sweeping allegation]. She might have direct or indirect evidence, but the people need to see that [evidence] to exonerate those who are innocent," Dy told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

He said Padaca, a first-term governor, should maintain constant and open dialogues with Isabela mayors to discuss various problems, including jueteng. He also said the governor should avoid subjecting local officials to trial by publicity. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Youngest bishop installed

THE PHILIPPINES' youngest bishop, 42-year-old Mylo Hubert Vergara, was installed in his diocese in San Jose, Nueva Ecija, on Saturday.

Vergara, former vicar for the clergy in the Diocese of Cubao and president of the Catholic Church-owned Radio Veritas Global Broadcasting, was among the last bishops appointed by the late Pope John Paul II.

He was named on Feb. 12 to the see of San Jose, which had been vacant since May 2004 when Bishop Leo Drona SDB was moved to the Diocese of San Pablo in Batangas.

Ranking Catholic prelates attended the installation, including papal nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines president and Davao Archbishop Ramon Capalla, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales and Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

"He should make a great effort to be a priest of the people. He should listen with his whole heart and mind to the people; there are many things he can learn from them," was Capalla's advice to Vergara.

Vergara is the third bishop of the diocese, which is composed of San Jose City and 13 of the northern towns of Nueva Ecija. The see was split from the Diocese of Cabanatuan in 1984. Both sees are among the five suffragan dioceses under the metropolitan see of Lingayen-Dagupan.

Vergara, who was ordained a bishop last April 30, supplanted Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas, 44, as the youngest Filipino prelate. Villegas was only 40 when appointed auxiliary bishop of Manila in 2001.

"He should continue loving his fellow priests, he should be their older brother," was Villegas' advice to Vergara. *Jerome Aning*

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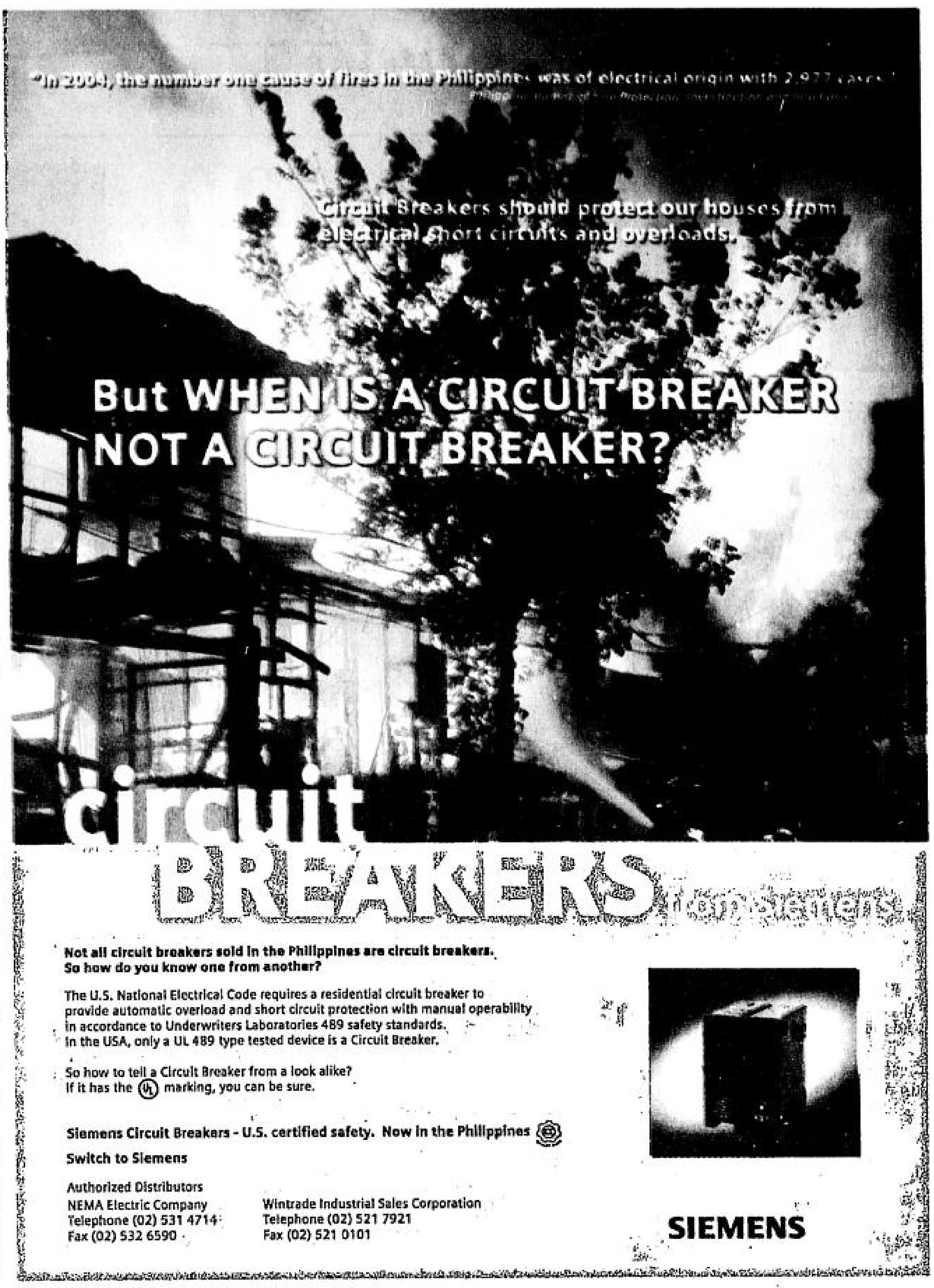
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Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Uzbeks bury 500 killed by soldiers

ANDIZHAN, Uzbekistan—The families of some of the estimated 500 people killed by Uzbek troops in Andizhan buried their dead on Sunday to the sound of continued sniper fire in the eastern town.

Two days after an uprising in the mostly Muslim Central Asian state's Ferghana Valley, wet blood and body parts hastily covered in soil coat the pavements, streets, and gutters in the center of this leafy city of 300,000 people.

Human rights campaigner Saidzhakhon Zainabitdinov estimated that up to 500 people may have been killed, which would make it the bloodiest incident in Uzbekistan's post-Soviet history.

The slaying sparked panic in some quarters, causing up to 4,000 people to flee to the closed border with Kyrgyzstan.

On Friday, armed rebels broke comrades standing trial for religious extremism out of prison, took 10 police hostage and occupied Andizhan's local government building.

Around 3,000 protesters opposed to President Islam Karimov staged a rally outside, which troops later dispersed by opening fire.

"They shot at us like rabbits," said a boy in his late teens standing outside School Number 15. Witnesses say part of the crowd fled toward the school, only to be caught in crossfire.

Karimov, a close ally in the US war on terrorism since giving Washington an air base in 2001, said on Saturday 10 police and troops had been killed and a higher number of rebels. He gave no figure for civilians killed.

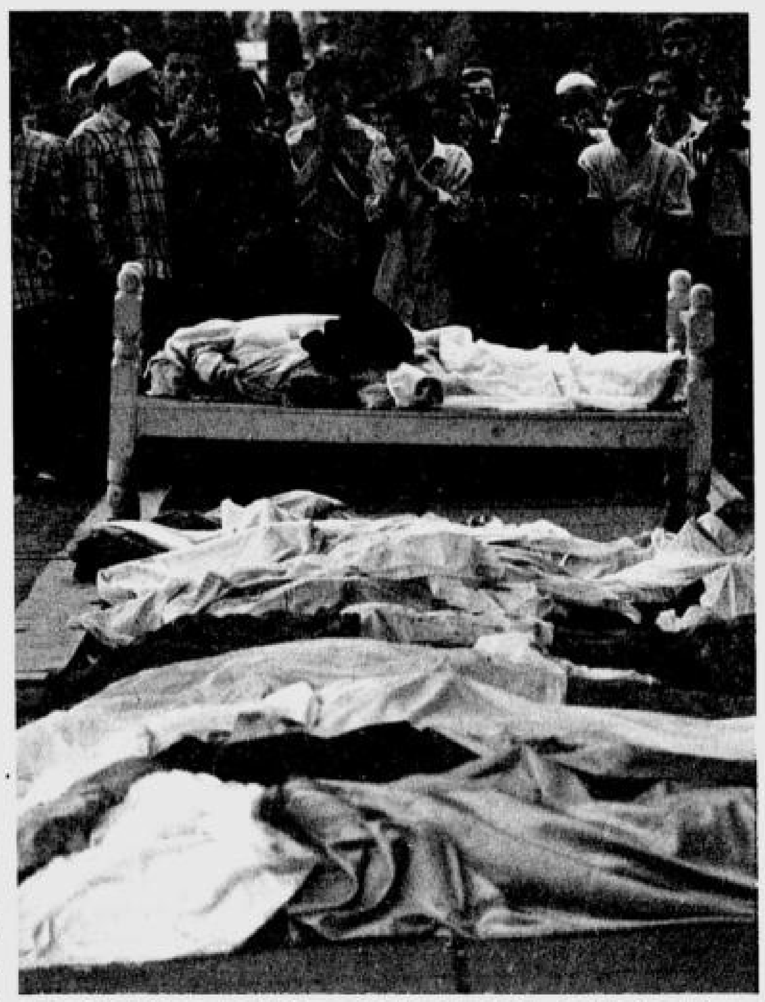
Karimov, criticized by Western human rights groups for jailing dissident Muslims, said the rebels belonged to the outlawed Islamist group Hizb ut-Tahrir and were to blame for the violence. Hizb ut-Tahrir denied involvement.

A former British ambassador to the country said unrest in Uzbekistan stood little chance of developing into the sort of broad uprising seen in other ex-Soviet states due to the government's "brutal" nature.

"I think it's being suppressed militarily as we speak and I very much fear that the Uzbek government will be able to put it down just by use of fairly brutal force," Craig Murray, London's man in Tashkent from 2002 to 2004, said.

The "people power" revolts in Georgia 18 months ago, then Ukraine last December caught the world's imagination.

In both cases, huge, peaceful crowds forced the resignation of corrupt, vote-rigging governments. In came new, younger, Westward-looking leaders who vowed to put their ex-Soviet republics in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *Reuters, AFP*



LOCAL residents pray in front of the bodies of the victims from the clashes between the government forces and local protesters prior to a funeral ceremony at the central square in the Uzbek town of Andijan, May 14. AFP

Millions test democracy in Ethiopia elections

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopians vote on Sunday in parliamentary elections widely expected to give Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's ruling coalition a third five-year term.

The polls—the Horn of Africa country's second real multi-party contest—will test how democratic it has become since Prime Minister Meles Zenawi overthrew dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991 and ended 17 years of Marxist rule.

Voting stations open at 6 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. Provisional results are due on May 21 and official results on June 8.

The opposition has accused the government of trying to rig elections, vowing to reject the results unless the ruling party stopped harassing and detaining its supporters. The government denies the charges.

Opposition groups advocating a bigger role for free markets in sub-Saharan Africa's second-most populous nation are mounting their strongest challenge yet for greater representation in a 547-member federal parliament in which they hold 20 seats.

But the main opposition coalitions are still expected to lose to Meles' Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and its well-oiled electoral machine.

Bereft of experience at the polls and subject to what they call harassment by ruling party cadres, opposition candidates have yet to mobilize grass-roots support in rural areas, which is critical to their success, diplomats and analysts say. *Reuters*

Rice makes surprise visit to Iraq to bolster government

ARBIL—US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a surprise visit to Iraq on Sunday to bolster the country's fledgling government just hours after US troops announced an end to a campaign to rout insurgents near the Syrian border.

As her visit got under way, the discovery of more bodies and a new string of attacks in Iraq underlined the severity of a security situation that has seen hundreds killed this month alone.

Rice arrived in the northern Kurdish city of Arbil on a C-17 military plane from Qatar. She had flown from Washington in utter secrecy, with only a few aides informed of the trip.

"I've been looking forward for some time to an opportunity to get to Iraq," Rice told a trio of reporters accompanying her on the top secret visit.

The secretary of state flew immediately to Salahuddin, near Arbil, where she was to meet with the Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani, in a convoy of Blackhawk helicopters with Apache escorts.

Rice, on her first visit to the country as secretary of state, said she wanted to look at the security situation in Iraq, the political process, and Iraqi efforts to develop the country's infrastructure and economy.

She signaled concern over the lack of significant participation by minority Sunni Muslims in a new committee set up to draft a constitution, which is dominated by majority Shiites—only two of its 55 members are Sunni Muslims.

"I think it is something that I would like to discuss with the leadership, the composition of that committee, and how (...) they can ensure that there is participation of all Iraqis, including Sunnis, in this process." *AFP*

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Al-Qaida still biggest name among terrorists

ISLAMABAD—Being big in al-Qaida is clearly not what it used to be, but the fear factor is.

While al-Qaida's ability to inspire like-minded Islamist groups has grown, its own core members haven't succeeded in carrying off a major overseas attack since Sept. 11, 2001.

So, when Pakistani intelligence caught Abu Farj Faraj al Libbi two weeks ago, many people responded: "Who?"

There wasn't even a reward advertised for Libbi, yet US counterterrorist agents say he was successor to Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the brains behind al-Qaida's stunning strikes on US cities more than 3 ½ years ago.

Al-Qaida is still the biggest brand name among Islamist groups. Videotapes regularly released by leader Osama bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahri see to that.

"The inner core of al-Qaida is intact, but as a group it's been degraded. Its survival depends on associated groups," said Rohan Gunaratna, a Singapore-based security analyst and author of "Inside al-Qaida: Global Network of Terror."

"Linked to al-Qaida" has become a catch-all phrase to describe any group that carries out an attack, and either declares admiration for Bin Laden, announces a hitherto unheard of or distant affiliation to al-Qaida, or has bona fide ties.

Last year's Egyptian Red Sea resort bombings and Madrid train bombings, the Casablanca suicide bombings and Istanbul synagogue bombings in 2003, a Kenyan hotel blast and the attack on nightclubs in Bali, Indonesia, in 2002 were all executed by local groups who identified with al-Qaida's cause.

"What we are seeing is a lot more locally organized attacks," Kenneth Katzman, a terrorism expert at the Congressional Research Service in Washington, told Reuters.

"Al-Qaida has become more of an ideological organization than an operational one," said Gunaratna. "Its long range, deep penetration abilities have been lost in the last 3 ½ years."

Most of al-Qaida's energy is spent fighting on virtual home territory, with the insurgents in Iraq, through loyalists in Saudi Arabia and hard core remnants still hiding in Pakistan's tribal badlands after fleeing Afghanistan in late 2001.

AL-QAIDA leader Ahmad Fadel al-Khalayleh, nicknamed Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi. AFP

On Saturday, ABC News reported intelligence sources saying a missile fired by an unmanned Predator aircraft had killed another senior al-Qaida operative, Haithan al-Yemeni, on the Pakistan side of the Afghan border.

Pakistan says nothing happened on its territory, while the United States has maintained official silence.

Libbi, as military commander and No. 3 in command, was doing his best to make attacks happen in the West's backyard.

Plans for attacks on London's Heathrow airport and US financial targets fell apart last July when Pakistani police nabbed a computer expert who was relaying e-mails from Libbi to al-Qaida sleepers in Britain.

And Libbi's main claim to fame was being named as the al-Qaida mastermind behind two assassination attempts by Pakistani militants on President Pervez Musharraf in December 2003.

Counterterrorist officials stress against underestimating al-Qaida's threat, or its potential to draw a new generation of militants, battle-hardened by the Iraq insurgency, to its ranks.

But ousted from its base in Afghanistan, with hundreds of members killed or imprisoned and its bank accounts frozen, al-Qaida is not the force it was—but it's still punching.

Cornered in the rugged tribal region of Waziristan after Musharraf ordered his army in a year ago, al-Qaida's diehards in Pakistan must spend more time running than planning. *Reuters*

Vaccine helps smokers quit

By Maggie Fox

ORLANDO, Fla.—An experimental vaccine against nicotine helped smokers kick the habit, Swiss researchers reported on Saturday.

Larger tests are needed but the test of heavy smokers suggested that 40 percent were able to quit smoking for nearly six months after receiving the vaccine, the researchers said.

Zurich-based Cytos Biotechnology AG plans phase III trials aimed at showing the vaccine is not only safe but works, and is aiming to get it on the market by 2010, Cytos Chief Executive Dr. Wolfgang Renner said.

Speaking to a meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Dr. Jacques Cornuz of University Hospital Lausanne said the vaccine was based on a bacteriophage, a type of virus that attacks bacteria.

Cytos designed a vaccine that uses part of a protein from the virus, genetically engineered to attract an immune system response to nicotine. Patients who get the vaccine generate antibodies that neutralize nicotine.

"They don't feel that they have to take a cigarette to feel better," Cornuz said in an interview.

For the Phase II study designed to show whether the vaccine is safe and can be tolerated, Cornuz's team tested 341 smokers, of whom 239 also avoided using nicotine replacement therapy such as gum or patches.

Two-thirds of them got five doses of the vaccine, at varying doses, over four months. One-third got a placebo.

Everyone was counseled about quitting smoking.

"The whole thing is totally exploratory," Renner said in an interview.

Cornuz's team tested the volunteers for antibody response, and found some produced more than others. Those who produced the most antibody after receiving the vaccine were also the most likely to be able to stop smoking—57 percent of them did.

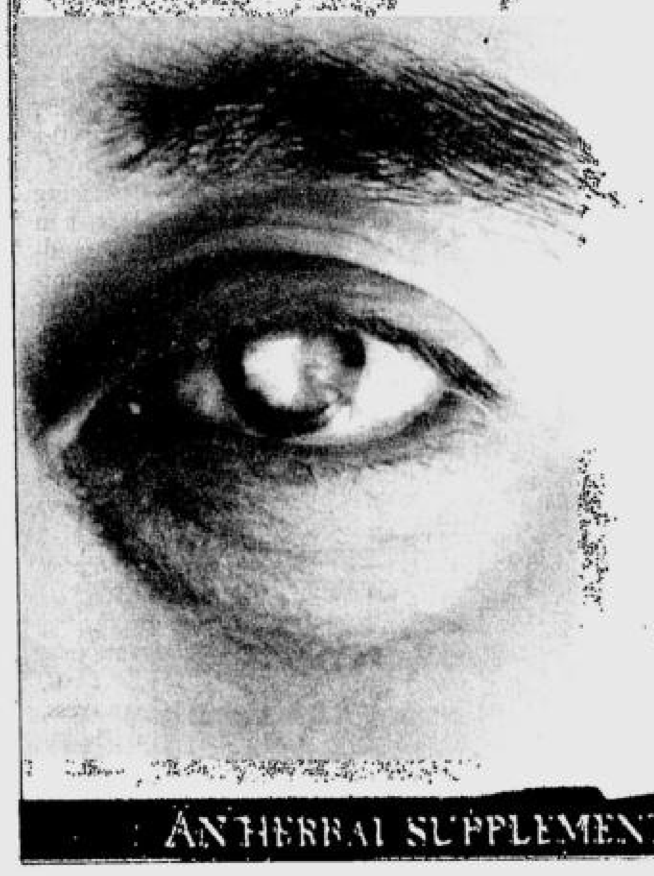
All the smokers who got the vaccine had some sort of anti-nicotine antibody response.

None of the smokers given a placebo produced any anti-nicotine antibodies, although 31 percent of them were able to stop smoking for 24 weeks.

Renner said his company also wanted to make vaccines to treat high blood pressure and Alzheimer's disease. The high blood pressure vaccine would target angiotensin 2, a protein that regulates the blood vessels, which is currently affected by drugs on the market called angiotensisn 2 inhibitors.

Renner said high blood pressure patients did not always take their drugs consistently and he believed a vaccine might be a more reliable way to control blood pressure.

Smoking is extremely addictive and on average, it takes 11 tries to quit. Tobacco use is the single largest cause of cancer and heart disease and kills 5 million people a year, according to the World Health Organization. *Reuters*



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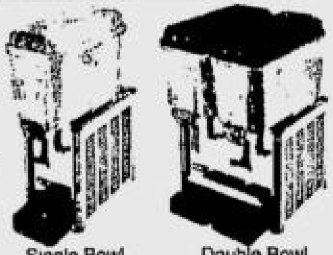

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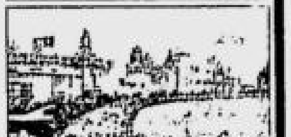

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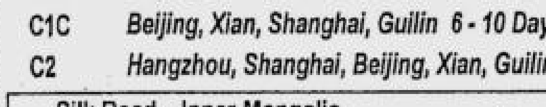

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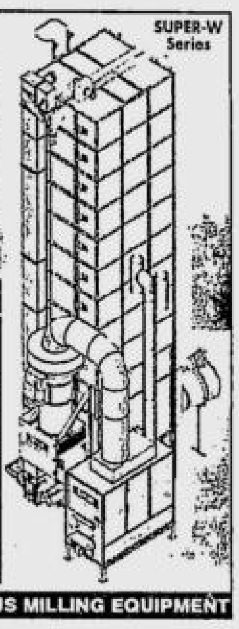

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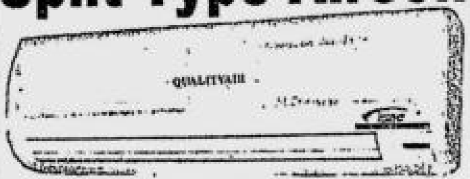
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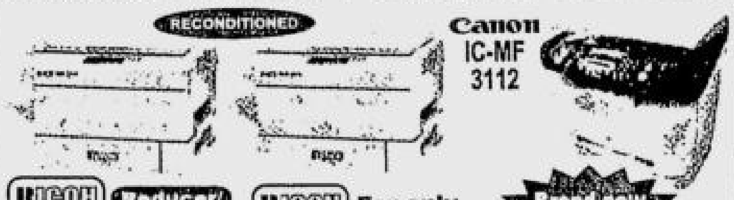
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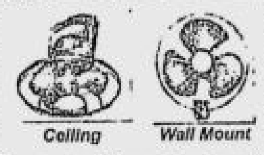
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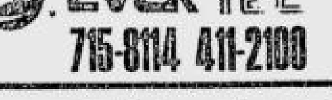
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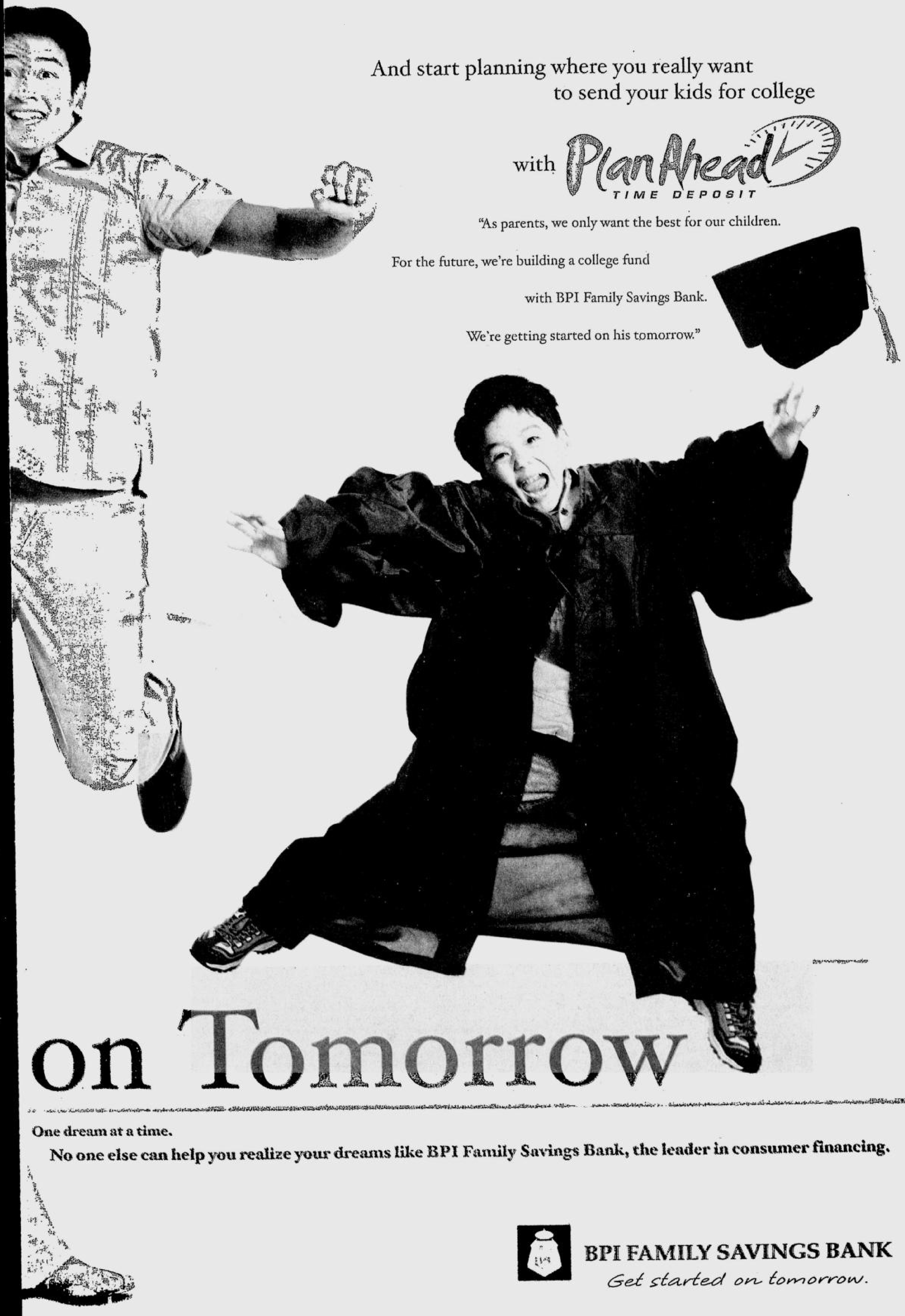

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EDITORIALS

Different planes

INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes has bewailed that the wave of killings victimizing Philippine journalists is getting more attention from the media than the killings of policemen and soldiers.

Speaking at the Eastern Visayas Regional Development and Peace and Order Councils, Reyes said that while the government views the killings "with seriousness," they should not be considered as an assault on press freedom because most of those were not related to the exercise of the journalistic profession. He also pointed out that other people—not only journalists—were getting killed.

Indeed, if we go by the statistics, more soldiers (fighting in Mindanao) and policemen have been killed in line of duty than journalists, since 1986.

But we believe that Reyes cannot put the killing of journalists on the same plane as the killing of policemen and soldiers. Journalists operate in a context different from the one in which policemen and soldiers do.

Soldiers and policemen are armed and are paid by the state to maintain public order and ensure the safety of citizens. As agents of the state, soldiers and policemen are armed with police powers to fight and hunt enemies of the state. In the exercise of their duties, they are given by law a certain leeway to kill the enemies of the state in self-defense or under certain circumstances.

Unlike soldiers and policemen, journalists are not clothed with public authority. They are not state agents. They are not armed.

If soldiers and policemen are killed in the line of duty, that is expected since by the nature of their occupation, it is at times inevitable that they would have to shoot it out with criminals or enemies of the state. On the other hand, journalists cannot fight back, and they have no way of defending themselves from violent assaults.

To argue that some of the killings of journalists stem from causes other than the legitimate pursuit of news begs the question. But it is correct to say that in many cases, journalistic investigations, when they uncover venalities in public office, could provoke violence.

In the performance of his profession, a journalist serves as the people's witness to events that affect their lives. This is why the death of journalists should concern the public more than the death of the minions of the state who are duty-bound to protect citizens and who are adequately armed to defend themselves as they perform their duties.

Like Pilate

Since the downfall of the Marcos rule in 1986, the year that supposedly saw the re-birth of democracy in the Philippines, 69 Filipino journalists have been killed, making the Philippines the most murderous country for media people; beating Iraq (where a war is taking place), Colombia (where a vicious war on drug lords is being waged) and Bangladesh and Russia.

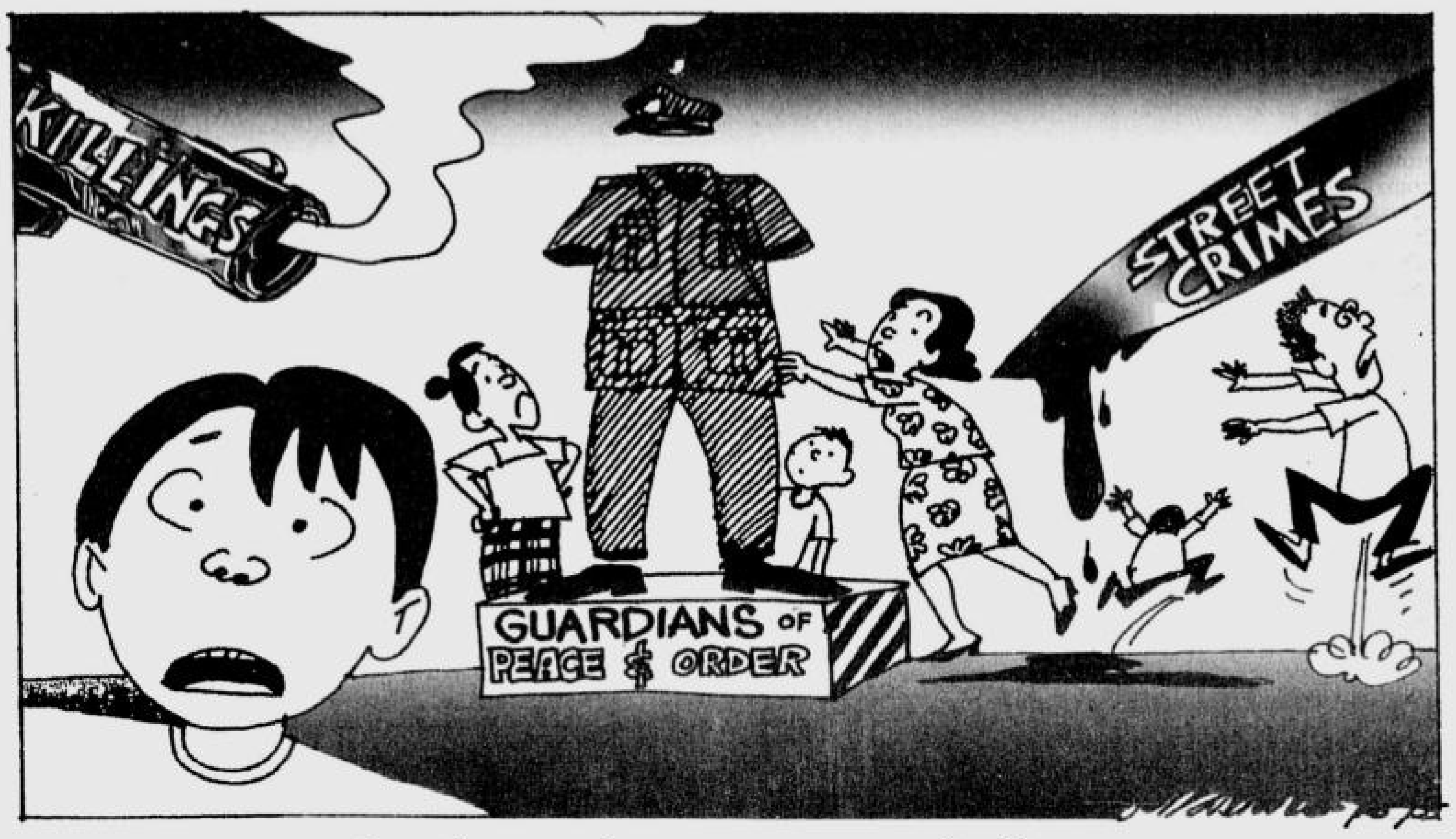
And the death toll on Filipino journalists has little to do with the risks arising from being caught in the crossfire of wars—whether these be between countries or on crime. And this has now become as much a matter of concern for the international press as for the local media.

The Philippine media have focused on this inordinately high toll of violence on their ranks not because it concerns their members; but, more importantly, because the killings underline two things—first, the breakdown of law and order in the country; and, secondly, the risky environment under which journalists operate in the pursuit of their job to disclose information that the public has a right to know.

On the other hand, the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) has blamed what it calls the "culture of impunity" for the high toll of violence on Filipino journalists.

The rampancy of this culture is what should concern Reyes—more than the less media attention being paid to the killing of soldiers and policemen. The culture of impunity points to the inefficacy of the law enforcement system and weak judicial system. Reyes ought to be doing a more effective job of law enforcement rather than asking the press to police itself, or to ask itself whether its members have ethical lapses that have provoked violence against them. He has to impress upon criminals that crime does not pay.

Reyes washes his hands too quickly for not doing his job.



The best deterrent to killings

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ADMINISTRATION has found a ready solution to any problem that besets it: hold a summit. At the height of the economic crisis, the administration's answer was to hold an "economic summit." Now that the administration is on the verge of collapse, it is going to hold a "political summit."

Crime is getting out of control? The President just held an "anti-crime summit." Name the problem, the solution is automatic: "summit."

Of course these "summits" don't achieve anything except to prove that Filipinos, especially government officials, like to talk—and they do a lot of talking, nothing else, in these "summits." But, at least, they give the impression that the government is doing something, besides keeping the protesters at bay, at least temporarily.

After media groups (fearful that the administration has finally found the ultimate solution to the population explosion, which is to depopulate the nation, beginning with the troublesome journalists) issued their "manifesto of concern" over the increasing massacre of their colleagues, the President issued her own press release ordering Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes to do something about it, and Reyes promptly did something. You guessed it, he proposed the holding of still another "summit."

Smart move, too. The summit would pass the buck to the journalists by asking them for suggestions on how to stop the assassinations and how to catch the assassins. But what do journalists know about stopping murders and catching murderers? That is the job of the police, which is under Reyes. The job of journalists is to tell the public the truth about wrongdoing in public offices. And for doing that faithfully, their ranks are fast being depopulated.

Reyes said a special body, to be created by his proposed "summit," will be the best "deterrent" to criminals. I don't think so. I think the best deterrent is to catch the killers immediately and to prosecute and imprison them quickly. The certainty that if you commit a crime you will be caught and punished quickly is the best deterrent.

But every crime that goes unpunished and every criminal who is not caught encourage others (seeing that they can get away with it) to do the same thing.

The job of catching criminals and punishing them is the job of the police and the prosecution and judicial arms. The job of journalists is to tell the public when the police and the courts are not doing that faithfully.

Sen. Alfredo Lim, a former policeman, related that during their time, killing a policeman was the surest way to a quick death. It was like committing suicide.

When a cop was killed, Lim said, the order goes out: "Drop everything. Concentrate on getting the cop-killer. Tap all your sources, do anything, but get him, dead or alive."

Usually within 24 hours, the cop-killer was dead, often buried ahead of his victim. That was how cop-killing was discouraged—the certainty that if you killed a cop, you'd be as good as dead. Even hard-core criminals steered clear of even the lowliest patrolman.

Now police officers are murdered in front of their own headquarters and their killers go scot-free. It has sent the signal to other criminals that policemen are now fair game. Similarly, the fact that the killers of journalists are not caught is a signal that criminals can safely waste journalists and nothing will happen to their killers.

Let's face it, the investigation prowess of the police has deteriorated tremendously since the old Detective Bureau was replaced with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), veteran policeman Lim said. Only the best and the brightest policemen made it to the Detective Bureau, he said, and the ambition of every policeman then was to be a detective. The bureau was composed of the elite in the police force. And, indeed, the most famous police officers in Philippine history came from that bureau.

Now the most coveted position in the PNP is to be a member of the traffic division—even if not officially—because that is the best-paid position now, even for rookies.

The Cabinet member on top of the PNP seems to resent the fact that media groups are protesting the unabated diminution of their ranks. Why is it that when a policeman or a soldier is killed there is not that much publicity, he asks.

Reyes is off the mark for several reasons. One is that media do give wide publicity to the heroic deaths of policemen and soldiers, often making special reports on them. Another is that cops and soldiers are different from journalists. Their job is to kill and be killed, and they go to their jobs prepared and fully armed. Journalists don't expect to be killed doing their jobs and, with few exceptions, don't even carry guns for protection. For their consciences are clean. Those who carry guns and feel threatened must feel they have wronged somebody.

As to the manifesto of concern, if you see the assassins getting nearer, won't you be concerned? Especially if the government seems indifferent to the threat, and the police can't catch the assassins.

In fact, Reyes seems to be blaming journalists for having themselves killed. He also said there should be a roster of journalists, which could be interpreted as meaning that if you are not in that roster, you are nobody and therefore fair game.

Another ranking police officer said the penalty for libel should be increased (more on this later), and some journalists themselves suggested that they should be armed. So many proposals, except on how to stop the killings and how to catch the killers.

Breathtaking imbecility

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLY, I cannot understand how this fellow ever rose through the ranks, let alone became the interior secretary.

Angelo Reyes says he can't see what the fuss is about journalists getting killed in this country. Cops and soldiers are also being killed in this country, he says, and nobody gives a damn. "If soldiers are killed, they become statistics. If policemen are killed, only I and (PNP director-general) Arturo Lomibao visit their wake."

The murders of the journalists themselves, he says, should not be viewed as an assault on press freedom since the majority of them are not related to journalism. Indeed, many of the victims may not even be considered journalists. "Who is a journalist? I consider journalism a profession that should pass certain criteria of competence, expertise or ethics. And a roster of real journalists should be maintained because not all attacks on journalists are assaults on press freedom."

That is breathtaking imbecility.

To begin with, you just go by sheer quantity, there is no comparing the murders of journalists, on one hand, and of cops and soldiers, on the other, in this country. Cops and soldiers are not being gunned down routinely while going about their work. Journalists are, particularly as they are coming home in their motorcycles from the radio booths where they have just unleashed a scathing commentary on the authorities for coddling drug and gambling lords. The sheer number of journalists killed in this country—though arguably, as I've pointed out again and again, all outside of Metro Manila—suggests systematic mayhem, and represents a direct, resolute and epic assault on press freedom.

But that is nothing. Even if the numbers were comparable, or indeed even if more cops and soldiers have been murdered of late, what of it? Being a cop or solider carries with it the natural risk of being wounded or killed. That is part of the territory, that is the nature of the profession. They get killed in encounters or ambushes, we lament the loss of life—and commend them for doing their jobs. Being a journalist is not, and may never be, an invitation to being wounded or killed. That is not part of the territory, that is not the nature of the profession. Not in a country that prides itself with being a democracy. The first task of government in a democracy is to safeguard the freedoms of its citizens, and none comes more precious than the freedom of the press. One journalist gets killed for doing his job, that is an assault on press freedom. An entire tribe of journalists gets massacred for doing their jobs, that is an absolute war on press freedom.

An official who cannot see the difference between the murder of a cop or soldier and the murder of a journalist has no business being an official. He should be fired forthwith, or forced to resign by public outrage.

But it's more. Reyes is not the first to try to blunt the edge of international criticism about this country having become the most dangerous place for journalists by suggesting the journalists themselves were to blame for it. Mike Arroyo took the same tack a couple of weeks ago in Bacolod City, implying in a speech before the Negros Press Club that many of the victims had brought their fate upon themselves for "irresponsible reporting." In the same speech he railed at the national media for "failing to tell the truth," suggesting that their members just write Nancy Drew stories. He proposed to improve on the quality of journalism in this country by applying to become a member of the NPC, saying he was a full-blooded Negrense and a photojournalist.

He was made so. But to their credit, several high-ranking officials of the NPC resigned at the atrocity. This forced Arroyo to back down, asking to be dropped from the NPC roster six days after he was inducted into it.

Reyes' statements are more of the same. The reason journalists are being murdered in this country, he suggests, is that they deserve to be murdered. That is so because they are not really journalists at all, just half-baked ones who were murdered for criminally—rather than journalistically—related activities. No suggestion can be more vicious.

At the very least, how does Reyes know the bulk of the murders are not profession-related when they can't even solve the murders? Reporters Without Borders suggests that the authorities themselves are the authors or masterminds of the murders, which is why they are not being solved at all—a "culture of impunity," it calls it. Reyes, on the other hand, suggests that Filipino journalists have become substandard en masse and are more prone to smuggling than to reporting, which is why they are being decimated. Which proposition is more believable?

But infinitely more than this, you grant that journalists in this country suck, why should that justifiably carry with it a sentence of death? The very hallmark of democracy is that people are free to say what they want. Of course that can, and will, be abused, but that is the nature of the beast. The victims of attacks can always answer back or air their side in rival publications or radio stations. A free press guarantees competition among media, which guarantees in turn a reasonable amount of fairness. But even without that, even assuming that in the provinces in particular, the victims of diatribes—government officials, provincial commanders and criminal elements, who are often indistinguishable from one another—do not get redress in media, why should they be free to mete out, or dangle, a sentence of death on offending journalists?

I will agree with Angelo Reyes and Mike Arroyo only on one condition. Which is that we first make the routine murder of public officials the natural punishment for irresponsible governance.

Saga of Filipino settlers in South Africa

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

KALK Bay, South Africa—Last Saturday, I wrote about the five brave Carmelite sisters from Jaro, Iloilo, led by Sr. Mary Grace Quino, who were sent to Cape Town three years ago to "rescue" a Carmel convent that was in danger of closing down due to the lack of vocations in the white community it was located in. The convent has since moved to another area where it has become truly immersed in the predominantly black and colored communities, and the nuns are hopeful vocations will be forthcoming. The African. Church is the fastest-growing part of the Catholic Church. But aside from running the convent and supervising its construction (she also plans to build a new church), Sr. Mary Grace has assumed another important role: as president of the Association of English-speaking Carmels of Africa. There are 13 Carmels in eight countries, namely, South Africa, Ghana, Malawie, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Cameroon and Nigeria. The Filipina nun's appointment to this post came from the Sacred Congregation at the Vatican and it's a great honor for the Philippine Church and her country. It entails her traveling to each of them and checking on how they are, especially when they ask for help, such as Malawie did recently. But it's not an easy task for a Filipina nun in her early 60s, who had led a cloistered life in Jaro. One time, Sr. Mary Grace found herself flying around in a six-seater plane in Uganda; another time, she had to travel all night for nine hours by bus to get from Nairobi to Tanzania.

* * *

Sr. Mary Grace, who must have been prepared for this African job when she served as a member of the Council of the Association of Carmels in the Philippines, feels that the Lord is using her as His instrument. "I go where I am supposed to go and the rest I leave to Him," she says, adding that "The fact that I was not afraid in those areas where I've never been to and among peoples completely unfamiliar assures me that my mission is from the Lord." She says her visits to the Carmels in the different countries of Africa have been most profitable for her personally. "I discovered that there is a very big difference when one allows the Lord to make him His instrument, than when one does things by himself. As His instrument, one does not have to worry about what to say or do," says the Ilongga nun.

* * *

Sr. Mary Grace stresses that the late Pope John Paul II had expressed during the World Youth Day in the Philippines the desire that the Filipinos become missionaries, inasmuch as the "Faith" was very much alive in the Philippines. To her, the presence of Filipino Carmel nuns in Africa and other countries, as well as that of many other religious orders from the Philippines in various parts of the world, is sign that the Lord is now granting JPII's desire. She says that JPII's death was "truly a Resurrection and Pentecost experience for all of us, and what he failed to accomplish very well in life is being fulfilled by the Lord in his death."

By the way, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should be comforted by the Carmel prioress' assurance that though the Ilongga contemplatives are far from their beloved native land, they constantly pray for their country and for the President.

* * *

At our May 8 dzRH program, which we held at the Carmelite convent in Retreat, Cape Town (with Cecile Alvarez at the Manila end), courtesy of Globe Telecom, we also had a South African citizen of Filipino descent named Stephanie Pastor-Eckhardt. She came with her mestizo husband, Ken, who is of German, English and South African mixture, and their 21-year-old daughter Claire, a law student at the University of Cape Town. Later the Eckhardts invited us over to their comfortable home in a Cape Town suburb where we met their other daughter, Deirdre, 17, as well as Stephanie's other brothers and sisters and their children.

My son Buddy had earlier told me that during his first visit to South Africa two years ago, he met a number of people of Filipino descent in the Kalk Bay area. I asked him to invite Stephanie's family to our show. She looks very Filipina with just a suggestion of being mestiza (her maternal grandmother is a Dutch woman who married a native South African, while her mother is also Dutch); in fact, she recalled with a laugh that when Ken and she visited her grandfather's birthplace in Palompon, Leyte, for the first time last year for a sentimental reunion with his clan, relatives easily spotted the white-skinned Ken at Tacloban airport, but Stephanie and a niece named Carmelita Pastor went unnoticed because they looked so Pinoy. The rest of their relatives in Cape Town look so Filipino too, though no one speaks the mother tongue anymore.

* * *

Stephanie's story is amazing. From what Ken and she could gather from stories and documents, her grandfather, Severo Pastor, fled Leyte in the mid-1890s, when he was in his early 30s, because he got into a tangle with some religious authorities in the Philippines. He got on a ship bound for Spain which sailed, like all vessels going to the Old World, around the Cape of Good Hope at the tip of South Africa. It docked at Simon's Bay, near the Cape, to buy provisions for the rest of the voyage in nearby Kalk Bay. The likelihood was that Severo came into contact with other Filipinos in Kalk Bay (who were referred to as "Manillas") where they had set up some kind of colony and were engaged in fishing, and in buying and selling provisions. Severo was enticed to stay behind and, in 1897, he married Juana Hilario, daughter of another Filipino settler named Jose Hilario. They raised several children, including Stephanie's father, Gregorio, and another son, Paul, who later formed the "Philippine Commonwealth League of South Africa."

(Next: how the Pinoy settlers "rescued" a dying town nearly 150 years ago.)

Wisdom from Guyito

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

INQUIRER carabao mascot Guyito has unwittingly become this paper's sage on the population explosion myth. A creation of INQUIRER cartoonist Jess Abrera in the lovable strip "A. Lipin," Abrera's Guyito has been running a conversation with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in what has become a virtual commentary on the fallacies of the population explosion debate. In effect, Guyito is saying that: population explosion is a myth; what is otherwise exploding is a profuse funding for contraceptions; Philippine poverty is not caused by overpopulation but by misgovernment. By churning out these series with a dash of humor in a comic frame setting, Guyito's pronouncements may well become the country's wisest proverbs that the *masa* can identify with without getting obfuscated by the technical rhetoric of the so-called population experts and anti-life advocates.

It will elate Guyito that there indeed are many readers who resonate very avidly with the population explosion myth. I have singled out some of the most eloquent opinions sent by readers of this column.

Reader Anna Cecilia C. Alejo of Sampaloc, Manila gives us a powerful estimation of some of these fallacies: "I cannot understand why our congressmen would push for something that has been disproved by scholars from developed economies. Aside from John Paul II's exposition on *Evangelium Vitae* which he elaborated with convincing clarity, questions and issues on the so-called 'overpopulation' have been answered and resolved by leading economists, among them Julian Simon, author of "Ultimate Resource," and Gary Becker, 1992 Nobel Prize winner and economics professor at the University of Chicago. In his article, "How to Defuse a Population Bomb," Becker couldn't have said it any better: 'An efficient remedy for this population divide would be for many men and women in countries with low incomes and growing populations to move to those with high incomes and stable or declining populations. The recent estimates from the United Nations show that developed regions absorbed about 20 million immigrants from poorer nations during the last decade of the twentieth century.'

"In the last 40 years, multilateral lending institutions and development organizations have spent $17 billion on controlling the populations of developing nations. They have little to show for it. I'm almost sure that the amount would have grown and given a huge return on investment if they had been poured into more 'productive' economic activities. Four decades is a long time; this would have been more than sufficient for that amount to triple had it been invested in technology and human resource development. Simon had been right all along: Malthus did not know there will be great inventions in this day and age.

"Becker seconded this formula, saying: 'The problems would be greatly reduced if poorer nations promoted greater economic growth through encouraging entrepreneurship and through greater investments in human and physical capital, for birthrates invariably fall rapidly when countries have faster economic growth and expanding education, especially for women.'"

From reader Charles L. Jonas, these revealing data: "The sex education provisions (of the proposed House Bill 3773) are particularly misleading. Since the advent of public school sex education in America, rates of teen pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases have skyrocketed. Even data from Planned Parenthood, the major proponent of artificial contraception in America, shows an increase in teen pregnancy and abortion for those who enroll in their clinics, rather than a decrease as they intend to produce.

"Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family explains it best. Coed sex education, he says, breaks down the natural barriers that help preserve virginity and makes casual sexual experimentation more likely to occur. It also strips kids, especially girls, of their modesty to have every detail of anatomy, intercourse and condom use made explicit in coed situations. Whereas it was a weighty decision to give up one's virginity in decades past, it is but a small step for those whose conditioning began in the classroom.

"Moreover, those who are pushing for this bill are not revealing their full agenda. Although they might publicly talk of sex education being values-free biological information, their private conversation is quite different. In fact, one of the biggest such groups in the States has recently come out in the open, admitting what others have suspected all along. Theirs is an agenda that flies in the face of all known Christian morality and is meant to promote total sexual license for all individuals regardless of age, marital status or sexual orientation. (They even want explicit sex education to start at age 5!)."

Finally, from Cynthia B. Tamoria of Makati City comes this personal testimony of poverty and faith: "The poverty that is hovering over us is not due to overpopulation and the solution to poverty is population control. I myself came from a very poor family of seven siblings. Although it was so difficult raising a large family, my parents did not resort to artificial contraception, out of love and fear of God. Because of sheer determination and with the grace of God, my parents, a jeepney driver and a dressmaker, were able to send us through college. Now, we are relatively living comfortably, and are productive citizens of our society. So, we should not treat or view each newborn as 'a mouth to feed' but 'a pair of hands to work."

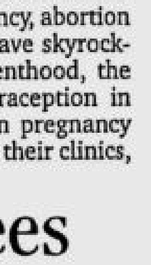
What a shame that it is a comic strip mascot who is clearly showing us the light of day! Thank you, Jess Abrera.

Comments to monta@cu-cdo.edu.ph

A gift of trees

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



ISRAEL and the Philippines established diplomatic relations in 1957. Full-pledged embassies were opened both in Tel-Aviv and in Manila in 1962.

Israel has always demonstrated a special affection for the Philippines for two main reasons: One, because of the refuge given to Jews before World War II; two, because the Philippines was the only Asian country to support the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine when the United Nations voted on the issue (the Philippines actually claims the historical distinction of casting the deciding vote in 1947). While Philippine foreign policy has become heavily Arab-oriented due to economic and security considerations (the huge number of Filipinos working in Arab countries and the political support those countries give the Philippines in dealing with the Muslim rebels in Mindanao), there are important economic advantages to good relations with Israel, as well. There are an estimated 50,000 Filipinos in Israel, the majority of whom are nurses and caregivers. They play an increasingly prominent role in Israeli society, and they are well-liked. At the same time, according to Fernando O. Peña of the Philippine-Israel Business Association, the Philippines does more business with Israel than it does with one of its oldest trading partners, Spain.

During the reception commemorating Israel's 57th year of independence, I had a chance to talk to Guy Feldman, deputy chief of mission in charge of political, economic and cultural affairs in the Embassy of Israel. Mr. Feldman has an idea: The ties of humaneness and humanitarianism that bind the Philippines and Israel should be reflected in a practical, non-political, but prominent program between the two countries. The recent disastrous floods in Quezon and Aurora provinces, in particular, struck him since the two provinces are named after Filipinos much honored by the Israelis. It so happens that one of Israel's proudest achievements has been the active, and successful, reforestation of their country. Why not, he suggested, involve Israel in reforestation efforts in those provinces?

The history of reforestation in Israel is interesting, intimately tied as it is, to the Jewish faith. An online article (MidEastWeb for Coexistence RA, at http://www.mideastweb.org.), titled "Tu Bishvat—The Tree Holiday," is instructive. The article explains that Tu Bishvat "is the ancient Jewish new year of the trees. Celebrated on the 15th of the month of Shvat of the Hebrew lunar calendar, it usually falls in February or late January. The name Tu Bisvhat means 15th of Shvat (Tu-bi-Shvat). 'Tet vav' in the Hebrew numbering system is 15. The 'vav' becomes a vowel—'oo.' In ancient times, Tu Bishvat was a harvest holiday that may have been started for tax purposes."

The article goes on to explain the enduring nature of the tree holiday: "After the Jews were exiled from Israel and stopped engaging in agriculture, the holiday lost its significance. However, when Rabbi Isaac Lurie and his students founded a Jewish community in Safed in the Galilee, they started the custom of eating fruit on the 15th of Shvat, as a symbol of man's participation in the joy of the trees. This custom soon spread among all the Jewish communities. In the 16th century, others started a tradition of celebrating a Tu Bishvat Seder or festive meal.

The relationship of the tree holiday to actual reforestation is explained as follows: "With the rise of Zionism, Jews returned to the land and began to farm it. Tu Bishvat assumed a special significance in the life of the Jewish community in Israel. The hillsides of Judea and the Galilee had been stripped of tree cover. Hydrogeologists and agronomists believed that planting trees would help increase rainfall in this dry land, and tree roots would help retain water and anchor soil on eroded hillsides. In swampy areas, eucalyptus trees were needed to absorb water. Tu Bishvat became a symbol of the massive reforestation effort. In a custom begun in 1908, each year on Tu Bishvat, Israeli school children and adults participate in tree planting ceremonies throughout Israel. As a result of the reforestation effort, Israel is the only country in the world that has more tree cover at the beginning of the twenty-first century than it did at the beginning of the twentieth century."

Jews around the world have given generously to the tree planting effort. One American rabbi recounts: "Some of us can remember when we attended 'Sunday School' or 'Hebrew School' and we were encouraged to buy trees in Israel, and how we affixed stamps to a tree chart, and then later received certificates saying that a tree had been planted in Israel. It was also the time to empty out the blue-and-white *pushke*, the Jewish National Fund box into which we dropped coins throughout the year." The Jewish National Fund (*Keren Kayemet* in Hebrew) continues to play a significant role in the reforestation of Israel since the founding of the modern state. Planting a tree is encouraged as a way of helping Israel and to honor someone special. The cost for each tree is $10.00.

Guy Feldman believes that Israel's expertise in reforestation can make a profound difference in reforestation efforts here. He has asked experts to come to the Philippines and survey the state of our forests in Quezon province, for example. But what he lacks are dependable local partners. There is immense potential in what Mr. Feldman proposes; what's needed are Filipinos with a credible environmental background, and Filipino organizations with a proven track record, who will step forward and enter into formal discussions. If you belong to such a group, or know of one, don't hesitate to contact the Israeli Embassy. They want to help; they should help; we should do all we can to make sure the help gets through.

Misbehaving Divas

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—When I first read about Nora Aunor's being busted by the Los Angeles International Airport police for carrying "shabu," my first reaction was: What is it with these celebrity superstars? Is it arrogance or stupidity, or both? She should have brought along, instead of a boyfriend, a traveling companion who knows about drug laws and airports in the United States.

Even the Honolulu International Airport, much smaller by comparison, is crawling not only with cops but also with sniffing dogs. Some of them are actually cute-looking animals, and it can be amusing how they go around on a leash sniffing everything about you, including your shoes, but especially your luggage, of course. I once asked a "trainer" how such dogs are trained to sniff drugs, and he gave an answer that I didn't quite comprehend.

Nora Aunor's case reminded me of another superstar diva, Whitney Houston, who somewhat got away from being busted on the spot because she was "misbehaving" in a relatively tiny airport in Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii. Had that incident happened in Honolulu, not to mention, L.A., the police would have detained her right away, like they did La Aunor. The year was 2000 and it happened this way.

On Jan. 11, Whitney and her husband Bobby Brown, who were going back to San Francisco from Kona, were stopped by airport guards who found 15.2 grams of marijuana in Whitney's bag after a routine inspection. The Big Island is quite well-known for marijuana production. The guards saw something "organic" in Whitney's bag as it went through the metal detector. But before the two could be questioned, they managed to slip by and board the airplane bound for San Francisco. If she had been an ordinary passenger, rather than the celebrity pop diva Whitney Houston, she could have been arrested right there.

Whitney pleaded "no contest" to a charge of promoting a detrimental drug, a petty misdemeanor in Hawaii. She was informed by Kona District Judge Joseph Florendo that she could have the case dismissed and erased from her record if she agreed to several "probation-type" conditions. This usually happens in "plea bargain" agreements.

Among these conditions were: Whitney had up until Feb. 1, 2000 to pay a fine of $1,000 to the Hawaii State General Fund, $25 to the Criminal Victim's Compensation Fund, and, in lieu of "community service," donate $3,000 to a youth anti-drug program called "Big Island Wave Riders Against Drugs." Whitney also agreed to stay out of legal trouble and submit herself to an "evaluation" to determine whether she had been abusing drugs.

Before accepting the plea agreement, Whitney voluntarily submitted to a drug test and her lawyer said the results were as expected—negative. She was clean. So that should have been the end of the story.

But the Hawaii incident was only the beginning of Whitney's string of problems, which fueled the tabloids with stories, imagined or otherwise, about the precarious state of her emotional and mental health. In March 2000, she was dropped from the annual Oscar ceremonies in L.A., unable to perform. She just looked wretched. In September 2001, during the Michael Jackson tribute concert, Whitney shocked fans with her emaciated and unsteady appearance, looking more like a famine victim in Africa rather than a superstar in the United States. There were even rumors later that she was already dead from drug overdose.

In December 2002, looking a bit rehabilitated, Whitney told Diane Sawyer of ABC that she "partied her tail off" combining alcohol, pot, cocaine and pills, but that thanks to prayer, she was back to sober. But obviously that was only for a while.

A year later, Whitney, who had had two separations from her husband Bobby Brown, appeared with a bruised cheek and cut lip, evidently the result of a domestic scuffle. Brown was charged with assault and battery, but Whitney, probably still in dazed state, showered Brown with hugs and kisses during a court hearing. It's truly a dysfunctional story.

Meanwhile, Bobby was having his own troubles with the law. In 1998, he was picked up violating his probation, testing positive for cocaine. He was put back in the slammer in Florida for 75 days for violating the terms of his probation. He himself had a long list of misbehaviors, and the conventional wisdom was that he got Whitney into the drug habit.

In 1993, for instance, Brown was arrested for "an overly suggestive stage performance" in Georgia. In 1995, he was arrested in Disney World in Florida after a fist fight. He also wrecked a Porsche while driving drunk. In 1997, he inflicted facial injuries on Whitney Houston in a domestic brawl. And in 1998, he was arrested for sexual battery. In 2000, he served 26 days in jail for a cocaine-related violation. Finally in 2004, he was briefly jailed for failure to pay child support for two of his three children born out of wedlock.

It's all a very sordid and sad story. Whitney has been one of the most amazing voices ever produced in the modern scene, and she is also an incredibly beautiful woman. How she got involved with Brown and how the cocaine habit got the best of her is one of the most tragic stories among modern artists. In the end, she was too much in to this drug habit that she was beaten up black and blue one time by a drug dealer for "owing a ton of money."

Quick to cash in on this celebrity story, the media ran a "poll" about the fate of Whitney Houston. An enterprising website ran a "Whitney Houston Vote" and ran the following question: "Will she beat her addiction this time in rehab?"

The contest had this incentive to viewers: Vote Now and Earn a Free iPod. The next day, it became Vote Now and Earn a Free MP3 Player!

Whitney has undergone a rehab therapy in Antigua, a Caribbean island where she was sent for a four-week treatment. At this writing, it is not known how she is doing. But she is pretty much finished. And this is a sad commentary on how self-destructiveness, through drugs and dysfunctional relationships, has ruined one of the most talented popular performers in America.

And what about Nora Aunor, our own superstar? Her hearing is set for May 26. She's out on bail and going through her performances in various places in the United States. She has pleaded not guilty to the shabu charge. From all indications, this being her first offense, she may not serve any jail time. At best she could be put on probation, with conditions similar to the Whitney Houston case. But Nora is also a foreigner, and the threat of deportation is always there.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

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Mentally strong, morally weak public officials

I COULD not help but shake my head after reading the news item, "DepEd looking to hire 10,000 teachers who know English." (PDI, 4/25/05) I would have rather heard something like "DepEd intensifying efforts to produce better teachers." And "better" not solely in speaking English, but more importantly in forming the right values among the youth.

It seems to me that nowadays English, Science and Math are all that should be taught in the elementary grades. In fact, Good Manners and Right Conduct already seldom appears in many a pupil's report card; or if it does, parents are more interested to see their children's grades in the academic subjects. I am afraid that in the process, we might be unwittingly breeding future citizens that are mentally strong but morally weak and easily corruptible—indeed, not far from the breed of public officials that we know today.

One would hasten to say that English, Science and Math are essential in this age of globalization. But "globalization" was not even in the vocabulary of the good old days, and yet the very first Filipinos to land jobs abroad have been products of our old schools. That we now find it difficult to compete with other Asian countries in the overseas employment market only means that the quality of our education has considerably deteriorated, and should be restored.

The government has recognized that a very long time ago; it is pathetic that up to now we have not gained any ground. And so, in looking for the 10,000 teachers that it needs, the Department of Education, through its own shortfalls, might be akin to one looking for lost needles in a heap of hay.

—**RUDY L. CORONEL,**
10 Venus St., Golden Country Homes,
Alangilan, Batangas City

Migrante's low regard for OPAs

MIGRANTE International, for all its liberal advocacy for migrant workers, surprisingly indicates a very low and condescending view of the Filipino overseas performing artists (OPAS) in its letter, "Demented sense of job generation. (PDI, 5/04/05)

It alleged that the government had looked for more locations where Filipino women entertainers could be "trafficked" for further abuse and exploitation. The statement indicated an imprudent and sweeping perception of OPAs, as people working merely in indecent and undignified jobs that make them vulnerable to exploitation.

POEA records, however, show otherwise. Most of the OPAs deployed in 23 destinations overseas in 2004—through legal means and thus carefully selected for their skills—were composers, musicians and singers. Quite a number of the OPAs deployed in 2004 were also choreographers, dancers and circus performers. Were these documented OPAs victims of human trafficking; or worse, did they willingly engage in indecent and undignified professions abroad?

Migrante also alleged that the government did not lift a finger to assure the safety of overseas Filipino workers against human traffickers. On the contrary, the government has created a task force to protect the OFWs, particularly OPAs in Japan, against human trafficking. The body is developing programs to achieve Philippine-Japan cooperation in addressing the problem.

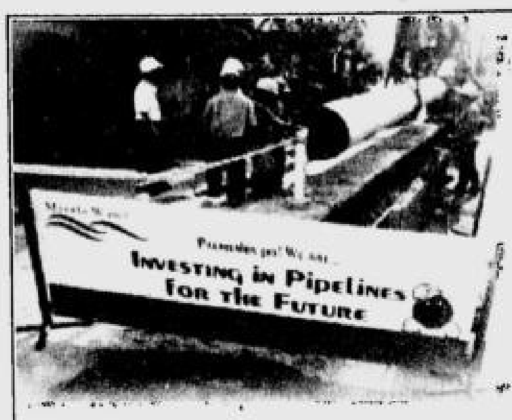
Making baseless allegations is Migrante's ploy to advance its vested interest at the expense of the OFWs, which indicates that its avowed concern for the OFWs is in large measure superficial.

—**JEFFREY D. CORTAZAR,**
assistant secretary,
Department of Labor
and Employment,
Intramuros, Manila

Untimely project

I AM a government employee and I am on study leave here in New Zealand. I find abhorrent the decision of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to prioritize repairing the walkways of Camp Aguinaldo (no matter how chipped and needing repair they are) with "decorative slabs." How can the AFP justify spending millions of hard-earned taxpayers' money for such a project at this time when thousands of our soldiers, working and retired, are not getting their much deserved and needed compensation to stay alive and support their families! If this is not a financially difficult time for us and our country, I would not question the project. But, my God, the AFP and the powers-that-be in government, by allowing this kind of expenditure at this time, have shown such an abysmal lack of good judgment and sympathy for our suffering soldiers and people! These untimely expenses should not be allowed. Not at this time. I feel so angry. I hope the President and Congress will call the on the AFP chief to stop the project.

—**MAYLIN JEMENA,**
may_hope11@yahoo.com



Manila Water

A. Rita Project update

Temporary 15-hour water interruption in San Juan, Quezon City, Mandaluyong and Manila needed to upgrade pipelines

Manila Water is currently undertaking a major pipe laying project called the A. Rita Line Project which will benefit approximately 70,000 residents. As part of the project, the interconnection of Phase 1 along Gen. Kalentong St. will result in a temporary water supply interruption starting 12:00 noon, May 17, 2005, Tuesday, up to 3:00 a.m., May 18, Wednesday.

Affected areas are the following:

San Juan: Bgy. Corazon de Jesus, Bgy. Rivera, Bgy. San Perfecto, Bgy. Salapan, Batis, Kabayanan, Tibagan, Maytunas, Onse, Addition Hills, MWSS ROW (F. Sevilla)

Quezon City: Bgy. Mariana, New Manila, Bgy. Rolling Hills, Bgy. Kristong Hari, areas along E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. (From Gilmore Ave. to MWSI Zone)

Mandaluyong: Bgy. Daang Bakal, Bagong Silang, Hagdang bato Libis, Harapin ang Bukas, Pag-asa, Burol, Poblacion, New Zaniga, Old Zaniga, Hulo, San Jose, Hagdang Bato Itaas, Bgy. Vergara, Bgy. Mabini- J P Rizal, Bgy. Namayan and Bgy. Plainview

Manila: Whole of San Andres and Sta Ana

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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Church leaders raise alarm over killings

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Catholic and Protestant church leaders and human rights groups in Eastern Visayas have raised an alarm over the rising number of killings of militant leaders, particularly the death of a minister on May 12 in San Isidro, Leyte.

They demanded that authorities immediately solve the killing of Pastor Edison Lapuz, a conference minister of the United Churches of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) in Tacloban and regional coordinator of the human rights group Katungod-Sinirangan Bisayas.

They suspected that the military was responsible for his death.

Lapuz, 39, together with Alfredo Malinao, was gunned down by three unidentified men in front of his house in Sitio Motor, Barangay Crossing, San Isidro town on Thursday evening. Malinao is a peasant leader in San Isidro, 175 km from this city.

The slaying of Lapuz and Malinao has brought to five the number of militant leaders killed in Eastern Visayas by unknown assailants since March. Three other militant leaders survived slay attempts over the same period.

Msgr. Bernardo Pantin, the archdiocesan media coordinator of the Palo Diocese, Leyte, said he was sad that even a church leader like Lapuz was not spared by "whoever is behind these series of killing incidents."

"If they have committed infractions of our laws, they still deserve due process," Pantin added.

The Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) also condemned the incident and raised concern over what they believed were attacks made on personalities belonging to groups that had earlier been dubbed "enemies of the state" by the Armed Forces of the Philippines

The IFI's Diocese of Biliran, Leyte and Samar said in a statement that President Macapagal-Arroyo, as commander in chief of the AFP, should "clean up the abusive elements of the military that violate their vows to protect and maintain the welfare of the Filipino people..."

Fr. Butch Avelino, vice chair of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR)-Eastern Visayas, said the death of Lapuz, who was one of the founding members of the PCPR, would only strengthen their resolve to continue the fight he started.

"Rev. Edison Lapuz will not be missed because he will always remain alive in our hearts and in God's work that we do... He was a staunch human rights defender," he said.

Nestor Nirza, regional information officer of Bayan Muna, described the death of Lapuz as a "cruel and fearless attack on the political activists in the region."

"This is too much! For the nth time we have been calling the AFP's commander in chief, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, to issue a condemnation statement thereby ordering their field commanders to stop this military's clandestine operations against their critics, but this had always fallen on deaf ears," he said.

Bayan Muna blamed the military for the death of Lapuz, as well as other similar incidents involving members and leaders of their group.

"This is a part of the systematic and brutal plan of the military to kill whom they believe and suspect to be front lines of the New People's Army," Nirza said.

Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, commander of the Army's 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan, Samar, had earlier said that Bayan Muna and other militant groups were "fronts" of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

He denied any military involvement in the series of killings of Bayan Muna officials in the region.

Surigao body starts probe of alleged abuses

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Peace and Order Council of Marihatag town in Surigao del Sur starts an investigation today of the alleged abuses committed by the military on civilians as operations against communist rebels intensify in Andap Valley.

At least several civilians have executed sworn statements about the alleged abuses, including arson.

For about two weeks now, the military has been combing Andap Valley, which is part of Marihatag town.

At least 10 New People's Army (NPA) rebels and two junior Army officers have died in the clashes that also wounded several soldiers and displaced hundreds of civilians.

Maj. Gen. Samuel Bagasin, commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based here, has denied any wrongdoing in the operations.

Bagasin said reports on human rights violations had been concocted by the rebels to put pressure on the military.

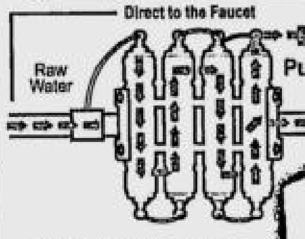
Maj. Alexis Noel Bravo, 4th ID spokesperson, said the NPA has suffered so much damage.

Quoting Bagasin, Bravo said: "It is up to them (critics) to think whatever they like for as long as the military is doing its job to go after the communist insurgents."

He said there was no truth to the allegations that soldiers were abusing civilians.

Bravo said the military was even organizing a medical team to help civilian authorities address the needs of the evacuees.

Jeanette Pantaleon, secretary of the Multisectoral Alliance for the Protection of the Environment in Marihatag, said that among those to be probed was a claim that soldiers tortured a civilian. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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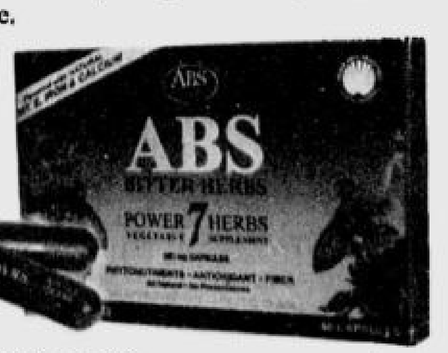

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Cops turn down ₱500,000 'bribe' from drug suspect

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Policemen here on Wednesday night refused a P500,000 bribe allegedly offered by a man listed as Pampanga's top illegal drug trader.

The offer, said to have been made by Neil Lingat following his arrest after a police chase in Sto. Tomas town on Wednesday night, failed to lure the members of the city's drug enforcement unit.

Senior Insp. Ferdinand Germinio, city police intelligence chief and the unit's chief, said he and his men "immediately and flatly" turned down the offer.

Germinio said the suspect made the proposal so he could seek a less grave offense (possession of illegal drugs) for which he could post bail.

He said Lingat offered to give them an initial P100,000. The balance was promised within the next three days.

Germinio, 28, a graduate of the Philippine National Police Academy in 1999, said they had "no regrets" in letting the chance to make quick money pass. Germinio gets a basic pay of P16,000 monthly.

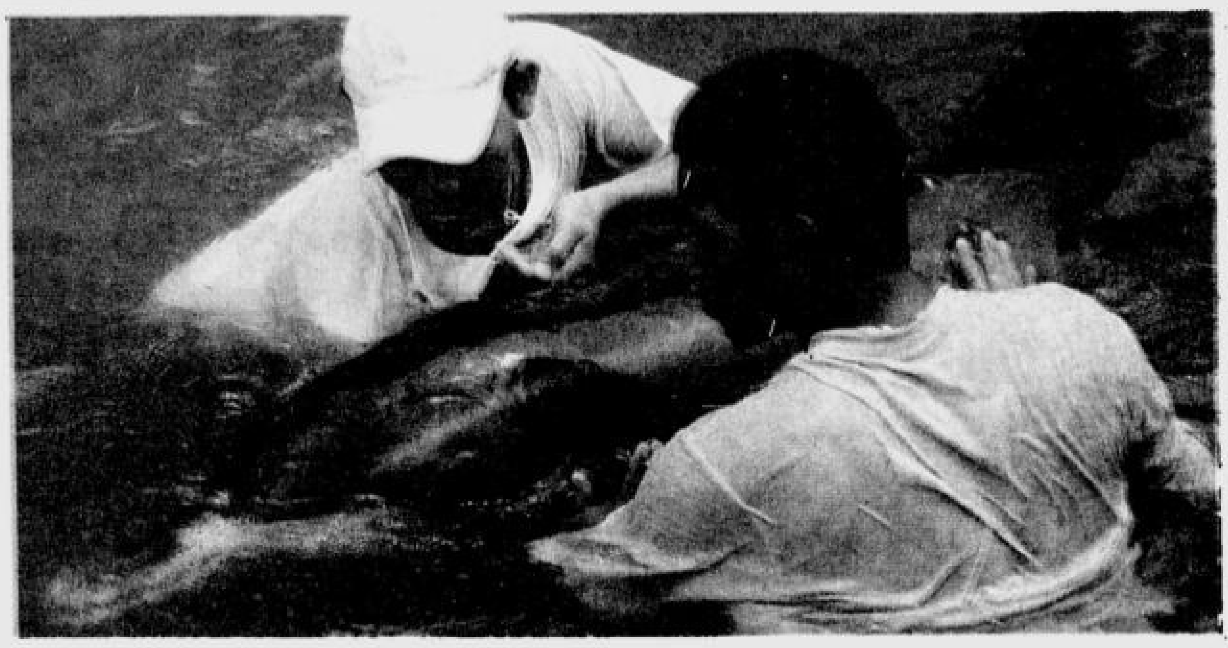
"We're duty-bound to serve the community," he said. "In conscience, we would not want more young people to be victimized by illegal drugs." Germinio's team is composed of SPO3 Joey Figueroa, SPO1 Noel Doria, PO3 Freddie Casimera, PO3 Augusto Tiongco, PO2 Abraham Garcia and PO2 Randy Dizon.

Supt. Nicanor Targa, city police chief, praised the unit for "adhering to duty."

"These young idealistic policemen make us proud. Their honest act reflects on the credibility of the police force," Targa said.

He added that the lawmen faced a bright future in the service.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, provincial police director, have recommended merits for Germinio and the rest of the team. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



SAVING A DOLPHIN TROY MALCOLM/ PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Marine biology students from a school in Zamboanga City try to help revive a 2.4-meter bottle-nose dolphin after concerned citizens saw the creature being hit with a paddle by sea gypsies along the city's baywalk.

ARMM gov bet vows to repeat successful program

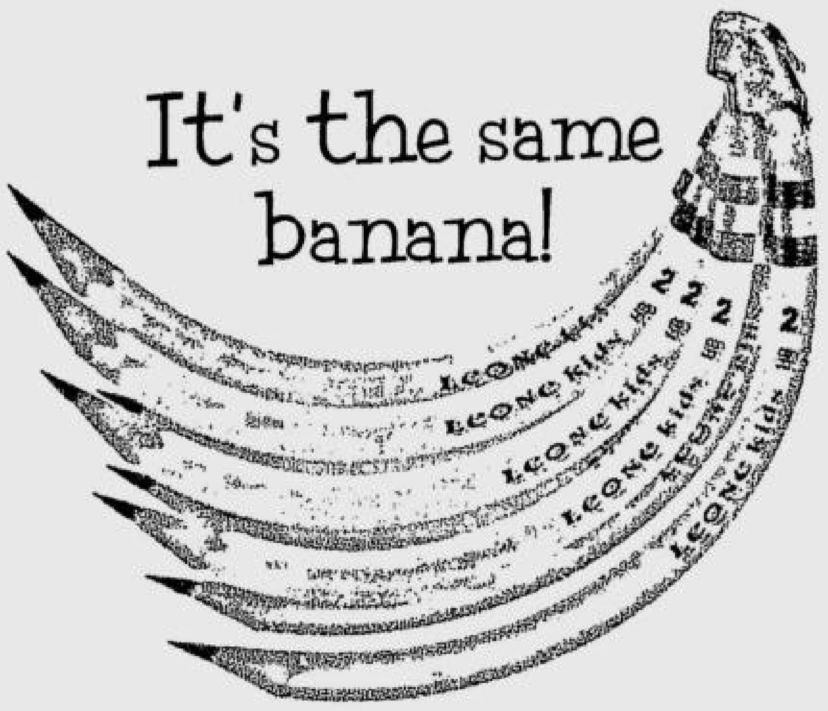
SHARIFF AGUAK, Maguindanao—A local antipoverty program that has helped address the problem of lawlessness could be replicated in the entire Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to combat terrorism.

Mayor Zaldy Ampatuan told other mayors from the region who met here Thursday that he agreed with former President Fidel Ramos that terrorism could be addressed not only through conventional warfare but also through continuing education programs.

"We could even work by ... converting potential terror hideouts in our midst into productive uses," said Ampatuan, who is running for governor under the Lakas party in the ARMM elections in August.

He cited the case of a dissidents' haven covering 250 hectares of land that had been converted into an agricultural area with farm-to-market roads and housing units.

An airstrip has also been proposed in the site. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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AutoCAD P4,800/72hrs	9.00-12.30 1.30-6.00 9.00-6.00 9.00-6.00	M-F M-Th Sat Sun	May23-Jun20 May30-Jul04 May28-Jul23 Jun05-Aug05
Advanced Ind'l. Motor Control P4,500/60hrs	5.30-9.00 8.00-5.00 8.00-5.00	M-Th Sat Sun	May23-Jun21 May28-Jul18 May29-Jul17

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Microcomputer Hardware Fundamentals P4,800/38hrs	8.00-12.00 8.00-12.00 1.00-5.00 1.00-5.00 5.30-9.00 8.00-5.00 8.00-5.00	M-Th M-Th M-Th M-Th MTTh Fri Sat	May30-Jun13 Jun20-Jul04 May30-Jun13 Jun20-Jul04 May30-Jun23 Jun03-Jul01 Jun04-Jul02
Microcomputer Hardware Servicing P5,100/35hrs	8.30-12.00 1.30-5.00 1.30-5.00 8.00-5.00	MTTh MTTh MTTh Sat	May30-Jun18 May30-Jun19 Jun20-Jul07 Jun04-Jul02
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Basic CAD/CAM P4,500/40hrs	5.30-8.30 8.00-5.00	M-F Sat	May30-Jun18 Jun04-Jul02
CNC Milling Programming P4,500/40hrs	5.30-8.30 8.00-5.00	M-F Sat	May30-Jun18 Jun04-Jul02
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Calibration for Process Instrumentation P4,800/38hrs	5.30-8.30 8.00-3.00 1.00-5.00	M-F Sat M-F	May30-Jun17 Jun04-Jul09 Jun20-Jun30
Industrial Process Controls P4,800/38hrs	5.30-8.30 8.00-3.00	M-F Sun	Jun20-Jul08 Jun12-Jul10
SCADA Visualization using Wonderware Intouch P4,800/38hrs	5.30-8.30 8.00-3.00 1.00-4.30 8.00-3.00	M-F Sun M-F Sat	May30-Jun17 Jun05-Jul10 Jun20-Jul08 Jun25-Jul30
Process Automation Package P8,800/72hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	May30-Jul08
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Programming In C++ P8,500/36hrs	1.30-4.30 5.30-8.30 8.00-3.00	M-Th M-Th Sat	May30-Jun16 Jun13-Jun30 Jun11-Jul16
JAVA Programming Fundamentals P7,500/42hrs	10.00-5.00 9.00-12.00	Fri M-Th	May20-Jul011 Jun08-Jun28
Developing Applications in Java P7,500/42hrs	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Jun08-Jun28
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26 schools to hike tuition

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 26 private colleges and universities in Central Luzon are raising tuition and other fees by an average of 10.3 percent this school year, data gathered by the INQUIRER from the regional Commission on Higher Education here showed.

Three schools limited the increases to miscellaneous fees. The CHEd disapproved the plan of 12 other PCUs to increase rates.

At least 138 others chose not to hike rates to maintain or draw more enrollees amid the trend of students transferring to 15 public colleges and universities in Central Luzon, said Felizardo Francisco, CHEd regional director.

Francisco said schools that have been allowed to increase rates had complied with two major requirements: consultations with parents and students and allotting 70 percent of the revenues to salaries of teaching and nonteaching personnel and 20 percent for the upgrade of equipment and facilities.

CHEd's Memorandum Order No. 13, issued in 1998, limits the profit from the rate increase to only 10 percent.

Francisco said that while more students enrolled in 2004 (181,902 in 2003 and 201,997 in 2004), the number of those who finished their courses went down.

Among 4,000 scholars, for instance, the survival rate was only 67 percent (2,680), he said.

"I can imagine how difficult it is for those who are spending for their education amid these hard times," Francisco said.

Nueva Ecija has the most number of schools that decided to increase tuition and other fees.

Francisco also said that among the pressing concerns of the CHEd this year was the low passing rate among aspiring teachers. The recent percentage dropped to 27 percent, he said.

Education and teacher training, as a course, cornered the second biggest enrollment in the last two years, after business administration and related courses. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

School owner trading fake dollars nabbed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police arrested the owner of a Catholic school in Batangas while trying to trade counterfeit US dollars for Philippine pesos from a money changer stall in Tanauan City on Friday morning.

Supt. Renato Angara, Tanauan police chief, identified the suspect as Felino Manalo, 47, of Barangay Poblacion, Mataas na Kahoy town.

He said the suspect was the owner and school director of Mary Immaculate Conception School in Mataas na Kahoy.

Angara said their station received a telephone call from an employee of a money changer at the Tanauan Shoppers Mart who informed them that Manalo asked them to convert $5,000 to pesos.

He said the staff had suspected the 50 bills in $100 dollar denominations as fake.

Angara said policemen went to the area at around 9:30 a.m. and invited the suspect for questioning.

Three Central Bank officials helped determine that the bills were all counterfeit, Angara said.

He said Manalo claimed that the money came from an agent of the National Bureau of Investigation, whom he identified only as Eric.

The suspect also said that some of his friends were able to exchange the dollars in Manila without any hitch.

Because of Manalo's confession, Angara said the Central Bank alerted the US Secret Service to keep a tight watch over other people who could have exchanged the fake money. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Cops say trader kidnapped

DAVAO CITY—Police yesterday confirmed reports that a businesswoman, who operates a taxi service, had been kidnapped by a still unidentified person. Senior Insp. George Duremdes, acting chief of the Talomo police, said Mary Chris Te, 32, of Emerald Street, Alpha Homes in the city's Matina District, was taken from her home on Wednesday night. The incident was reported to them by the victim's maids, Maricris Menrico and Analisa Metoda, he said. As of yesterday, the kidnapper had not yet contacted the victim's family.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Child missing in flood

COTABATO CITY—An 8-year-old child has been reported missing after the Simuay River in Maguindanao overflowed and submerged at least 16 villages after two weeks of heavy downpour. Mayor Tocao Mastura of Sultan Kudarat town said at least 50 families in six villages were displaced, while in nearby Sultan Mastura town, 40 families were displaced in at least 10 villages. No deaths were reported. The floodwaters rose shortly after midnight Thursday. Mastura blamed legal and illegal logging activities for the flooding.

Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Hot coconut lumber seized

LUCENA CITY—A total of 63,000 board feet of undocumented coconut lumber loaded in six trucks were intercepted by policemen and soldiers at a checkpoint in Barangay Lalig, Tiaong, Quezon on Thursday. A police report said government authorities flagged down the convoy of trucks past midnight and discovered the illegal cargoes. The trucks were registered under the names of Fernando Rabo, of Daet, Camarines Norte; Ruel Florido of Lopez, Quezon; Renel Acasio of Cabusao, Camarines Norte; George Julian of La Trinidad, Benguet; Jerick Bustamante of Gumaca, Quezon; and Fernando Asis of Labo, Camarines Norte. The report said the cargoes were all found lacking in papers.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Turtles found floating

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—About 60 turtles were seen floating off Malinsumo Island in Balabac, southern Palawan. The report reached Rep. Abraham Mitra through text messages sent to him from the field. A top official of the Naval Forces West confirmed that their men in the area saw dead turtles floating and that the cause of their deaths was still unknown. Task Force Pawikan, composed of personnel from the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, had already been sent to investigate the incident. Since the last week of February, dead fish were seen floating in Quezon and Rizal towns, all the way to Puerto Princesa, Aborlan, El Nido and Taytay towns. The extensive fish kill, according to PCSDS, was caused by depleted oxygen due to the proliferation of phytoplanktons in the waters.

Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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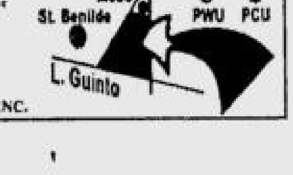

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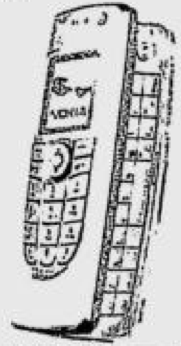
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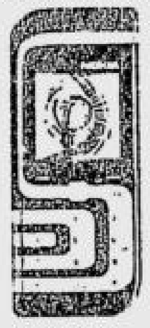
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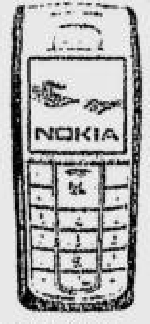
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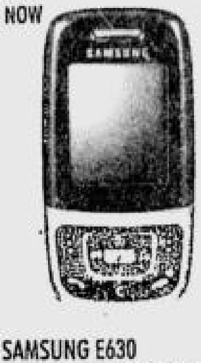
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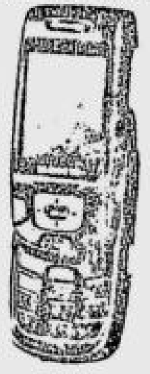
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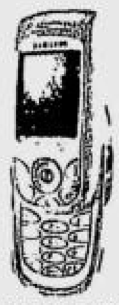
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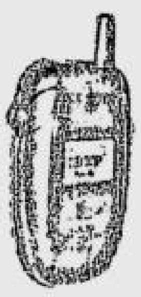
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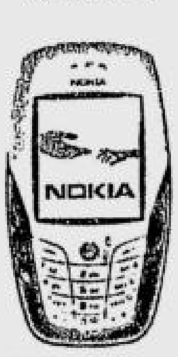
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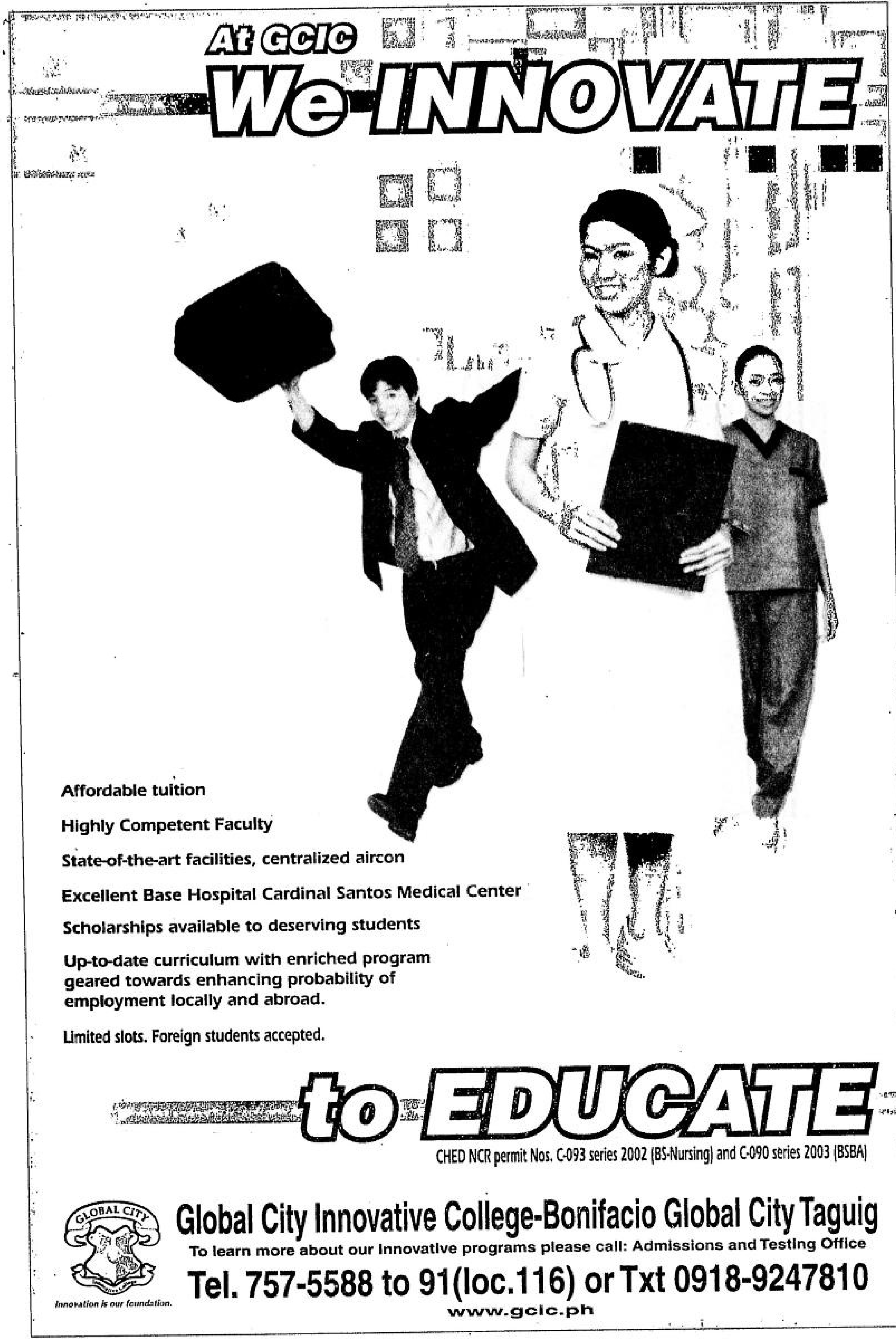
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Alcohol plant ordered closed

CALACA, Batangas—Mayor Nas Ona ordered Balayan Distillers Inc. (BDI), an alcohol plant in Barangay Talisay, to stop operations on May 13 for allegedly polluting the air and sea of Talisay and neighboring villages.

"The residents of the villages near BDI have been complaining of the pollution for three years now. BDI was built in the middle of a residential, agricultural and tourism area, and its operations harmed the environment and the residents' health, and ruined tourism in the town," Ona said.

Talisay residents have been opposing the construction of the alcohol plant since 2001, but then Mayor Jerry Katigbak and the town council allowed its operations despite flaws in BDI's record, he said.

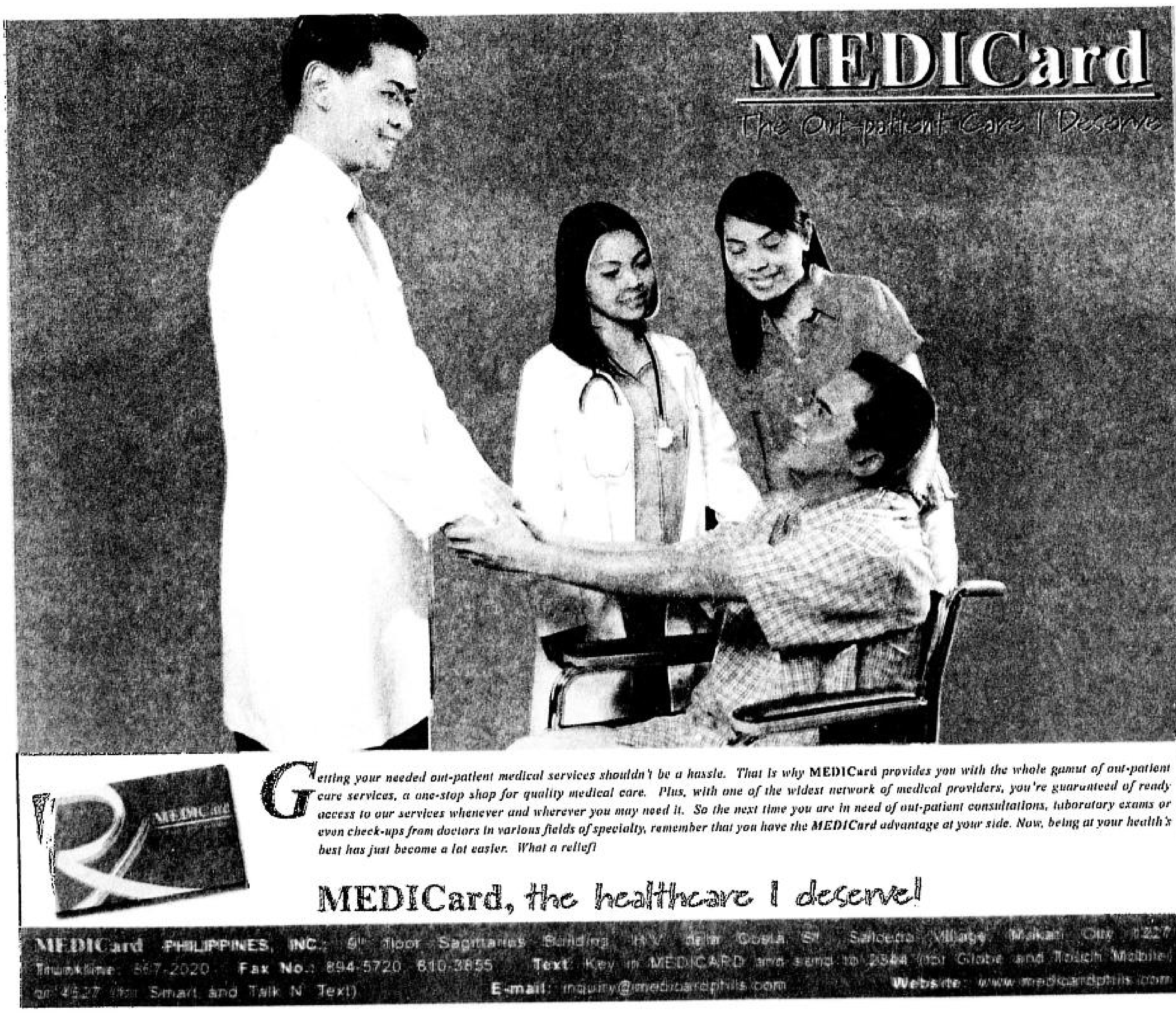
"BDI is just a recycled alcohol plant from Apalit, Pampanga that was closed down because of environment violations. "The plant dumped its wastes in the Apalit river," Ona said. "The cease-and-desist order that I have just signed is meant to stop BDI from doing the same damage here in Calaca."

The INQUIRER tried to call BDI president Davy Lee, but the security guard in the plant's main gate said he wasn't in the premises. He refused to give the manager's contact number.

BDI started operations in 2002, shortly after then Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez signed its environment clearance certificate despite the protests of residents.

The company produces 75,000 liters of 190-proof ethyl alcohol every day in a seven-and-a-half hectare lot in Barangay Talisay. The land was bought by businessman Alfonso Lim in 1997. *Mei Magsino-Lubis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

VILLAGERS of Solano, Nueva Vizcaya show unity in making of the longest "tupig" or native rice cake of the Ilocanos along the national highway on May 14 to promote local products and boost tourism in the province. The rice cake was 1.8-kilometers long. BEN MOSES EBREO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU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Vizcaya town villagers grill longest 'tupig'

SOLANO, Nueva Vizcaya—Villagers in this commercial center of the province grilled a 1.8-km long *tupig* (grilled rice cake wrapped in banana leaves) to beat the 1.5-km record set by Laoag City in 2002.

The grilling of the country's longest *tupig* opened the five-day town fiesta here on Saturday.

Tupig is made from glutinous rice. It is usually mixed with ground corn and peanuts wrapped in a banana or coconut leaf and grilled for a few minutes.

Villagers started firing their grills at 9 a.m. along the national highway.

Oscar Corpuz, barangay official of Osmeña, said he brought along with him 50 people to help in the event.

Street dancers from the Gaddang tribe provided entertainment as the villagers struggled to bear the heat while grilling the delicacy.

Mayor Santiago Dickson said the project aimed to boost the province's tourism, commercial, agricultural and cultural potentials.

"This event shows that there are many of Ilocanos here who trace their roots to the Ilocos region," Dickson said. *Tupig* is a popular Ilocano snack, he noted.

"We wanted to promote our town through this native product. If successful, it will be institutionalized to help our constituents earn and offer '*tupig*' in our '*pasalubong*' centers," said Councilor Regie Valino-Valdez, the event's proponent.

Valdez said the promotion of native products, such as *tupig*, was timely due to the influx of foreign foods in shopping malls and food centers that tend to erase the cultural ingenuity of Filipinos.

The 1.8-km *tupig* presented on Saturday used 245 kilograms of glutinous rice and four sacks of sugar.

Organizers used 500 sacks of charcoal to grill the delicacy. *Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

New VAT bill: All talk, no action

From page A1

knows just how much revenue the new VAT measure will produce. Published estimates vary widely from P35 billion to P150 billion this year, but one factor remains constant—the government's inability to collect its taxes.

"It is all window-dressing," said one economist who asked not to be named.

"The so-called 'sin tax' legislation (on tobacco and alcohol passed last year) has been so watered down by the House of Representatives, playing to powerful vested interest groups, that it will raise P7-8 billion rather than the P14-18 billion originally projected. And this was one of the cornerstones in (Ms Arroyo's) revenue policy," he said.

"The VAT bill has left the onus on Arroyo to raise the VAT next January and it was Arroyo herself who warned legislators a few weeks ago that it was 12 percent or nothing. Now she is left to raise the VAT herself."

Corporate tax

The economist said raising the corporate tax was a surprise to many as there had been no consultation on the issue or on how it would affect business.

"It is easy to say 'yes, but we will drop the rate to 30 percent in three years time.' That won't help small businesses that have gone to the wall between now and then," he said.

"One has to question whether or not our politicians have the people's best interests at heart or their own," he said, pointing to the elections in 2007.

The end-result is that the Philippines, one of the smallest economies in the region, now has one of the highest corporate tax rates in Asia. In communist Vietnam, it is 32 percent; Indonesia and Thailand, 30 percent; Malaysia, 28 percent; Taiwan, 25 percent; Singapore, 22 percent, and Hong Kong, 16 percent.

Businessman Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), described the increase as "uncalled for" and said it would send the wrong signal to investors wanting to come into the country.

At the same time, the PCCI said increasing the corporate tax to 35 percent could see many small and medium-sized businesses closing and more people added to the growing unemployment line which currently stands at around 11 percent of the labor force.

The cost of electricity, transport and oil is rising, adding to consumer and business costs. Trade union groups are pressing for higher wages in a country where over 40 percent of the population live on about P100 a day and the daily minimum wage in Metro Manila stands at P280.

The National Statistical Coordination Board has warned trade unions that their demand for a P125 increase in the minimum daily wage would push inflation to 23 percent from its present level of around 8 percent.

Gov't sinking?

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former presidential candidate who voted against the VAT bill, told Agence France-Presse "this government is sinking under the weight of its own incompetence."

"If the government is serious about solving this country's fiscal problems, it should start looking at its own house and, in particular, its inability to collect taxes which is at the very heart of our problem," Lacson said.

"There is no sense in raising taxes or expanding the VAT when I know from the records of the (Bureau of Internal Revenue) that out of a potential P190 billion, only P72.89 billion was collected last year. So where is the P117 billion?" he asked.

"Why raise another P145 billion out of an expanded VAT when the government failed to collect P117 billion?"

He said the BIR had failed to collect corporate income taxes properly, managing to tax a mere 9 percent of the total number of companies registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

BIR records in 2004 showed that out of some 451,309 companies that owed corporate income taxes, the agency managed to collect P100.8 billion from only 39,833 of these firms. *AFP*

RP rejects comparison with Argentina on debt

From page A1

In a separate statement, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said putting the Philippine and Argentine economies in one basket "is faulty and based on the wrong premises."

Bunye acknowledged that the country was facing tough times. President Macapagal-Arroyo last year warned that the government needed P80 billion per annum from new revenue measures to avert a debt default, but added that analysts "have to give us credit for the overall gains in the economy."

Philippine economic growth has been on an uptrend since 2001, unlike Argentina, which suffered a three-year recession before it defaulted on its obligations, it said.

"Proper debt management puts the average maturity profile of the country's medium to long-term external debt at 17.1 years," the finance department said, with average annual maturities at between $5 and $6 billion.

This "allows it to buy time for the government from diverting resources to repay maturing principal debt while it resolutely addresses the economy's structural weaknesses."

Balance of payment inflows are steady, with growing remittances from an overseas Filipino work force, while Manila's larger external sector gives it greater flexibility to service foreign debt. Manila's 2004 exports were equivalent to 45.8 percent of gross domestic product.

The newly approved VAT bill lifted exemptions and also raised the corporate income tax by three percentage points to 35 percent, with projected combined annual proceeds of P56-61 billion.

The same measure also authorized President Arroyo to raise the VAT by two percentage points to 12 percent next year, which would expand annual collections to P97-105 billion.

Argentina situation

So where is Argentina now?

The Argentine economy expanded by 8.8 percent last year for a second straight year of growth.

South America's second largest economy, however, halted payments on its public debt in late December 2001 after days of deadly street riots and political unrest. At the height of the financial crisis, the government also froze bank accounts and devalued the currency in a move that saw nearly half the country pushed into poverty.

The government of President Nestor Kirchner has recently been pushing for completion of a debt restructuring plan, the biggest ever by a sovereign nation.

Under the plan, Argentina is offering its creditors new bonds worth about 33 cents for each dollar of its old bonds. Argentina defaulted on some $82 billion in bonds after its economy collapsed in December 2001.

Argentina was due on April 1 to issue $35.3 billion in bonds in exchange for $62.3 billion in old defaulted bonds in a swap aimed at paving the way for a return to debt capital markets, which Wall Street analysts say is a prerequisite to sustained economic growth.

Some bondholders, however, chose not to take part in the bond swap and challenged the plan in a US court.

A federal appeals court in New York on Friday ruled that Argentina could proceed with its historic debt restructuring by utilizing $7 billion in bonds that had been challenged in court by some creditors.

"That restructuring is obviously of critical importance to the economic health of a nation," the appeals court said.

Argentine stocks soared on the news. *Reports from AFP, AP, Reuters and Christine O. Avendaño*

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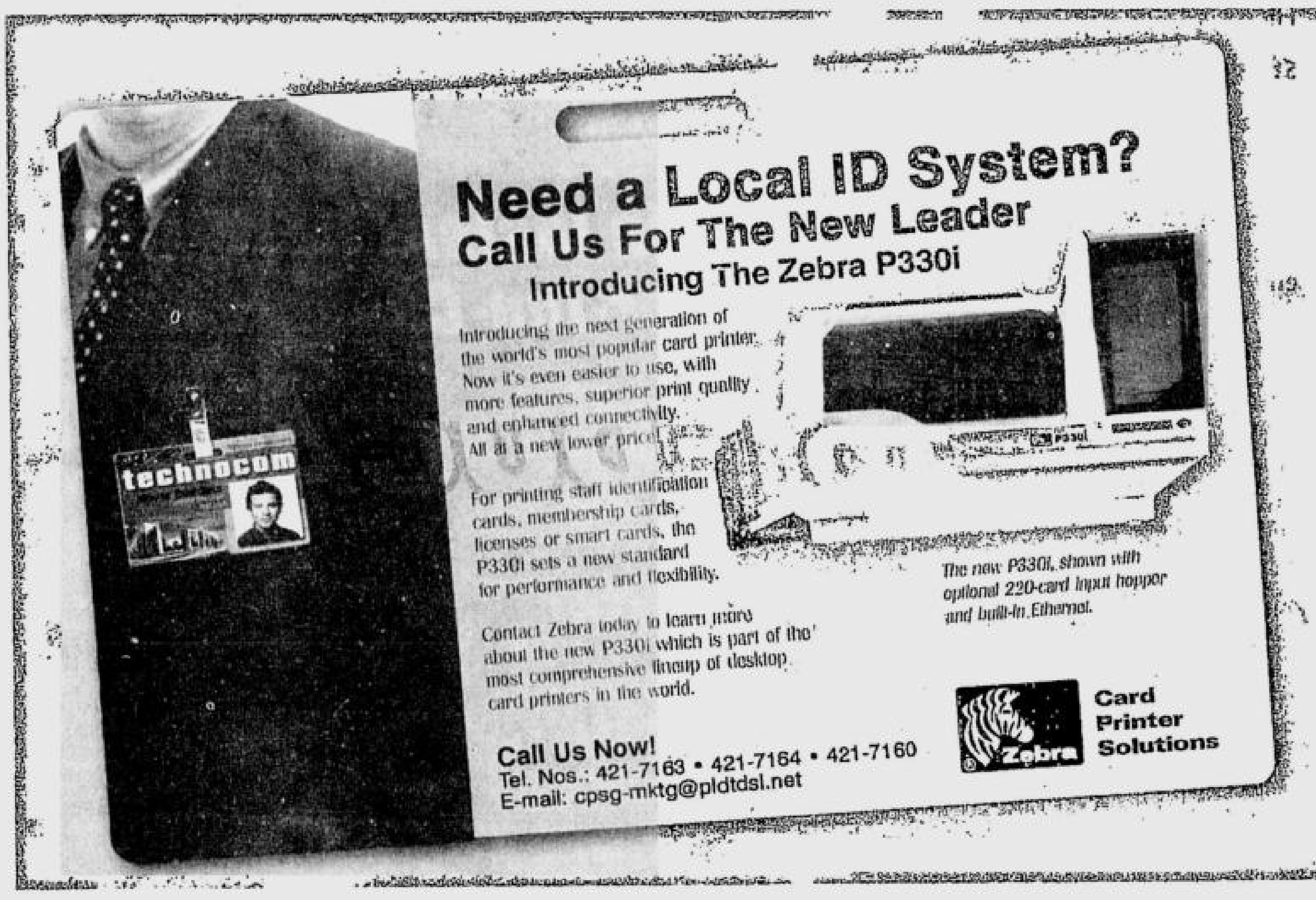
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'Bankruptcy disguised as illiquidity'

From page A1

"bankruptcy case masquerading as an illiquidity issue."

He said that according to actuarial estimates in the industry, PPI's undisclosed trust fund shortfall was between P6 billion and P8 billion in 2003.

He noted a mismatch in PPI assets and liabilities as the P2.6 billion in liabilities (against P3.3 billion in trust fund assets) as of December 2004 did not allow for the tuition costs that PPI would have to pay when the rest of its traditional plans matured.

Quarantine the cancer

"If the transfer of the assets in the spin-off did not correct the imbalances, then there was no reason for the spin-off," he said.

But he observed that in a rehabilitation, all liabilities would be extinguished.

PPI spokesperson Jeanette Tecson, a lawyer, acknowledged that assets and other PPI pre-need products were indeed transferred to Lifetime Plans before PPI applied for rehabilitation.

But she said this was done to "quarantine the cancer" that was spreading in PPI.

"The point of the rehabilitation was to distribute equitably the existing assets of the company to be able to service plan holders who will avail [themselves] of their plans in the future," Tecson said.

The "bleeding" had to be stopped because there were 400,000 other plan holders under PPI's other insurance plan schemes, she said.

"This was a prudent business decision. This was not a devious scheme but more of a way to save the company. And it was not premeditated," Tecson said.

She blamed PPI's financial woes on the deregulation of tuition rates in 1990 and the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

PPI president Ernesto Garcia has sought to paint PPI's actions as being aimed at honoring the firm's commitments.

"We tried everything to help our plan holders although we could have easily hidden behind our contract, which shields us from exorbitant obligations arising from a change in government rules and policy," he said.

Garcia said PPI had foreseen what was happening now and stopped selling the open-ended plans in 1992, focusing solely on servicing them.

He said that for the past 14 years, PPI had paid a total of P1.5 billion in tuition claims and sent 56,000 scholars to school.

"But the company cannot do this indefinitely. There was no way Pacific Plans, or any company for that matter, could earn enough to cover those steady annual increases (in tuition rates). But we paid everybody, using our operating profits through those years," Garcia said.

Industry weaknesses

More than the lost dreams of 34,000 plan holders, the PPI saga has brought into focus the inherent weaknesses of an industry that came into being because of a loophole in the law and, using a combination of political influence and persuasive lobbying, has largely succeeded in resisting all attempts to properly regulate it.

Also coming under intense public scrutiny are the quality of government regulators, the lack of congressional will to pass the needed laws and the integrity of the stockholders and owners of the pre-need companies.

"The pre-need industry is ruled by greed. Its glory days are probably over. Even if it survives it will be faced with tougher regulation and a more vigilant and demanding public," commented one industry analyst.

Pioneer in pre-need

PPI is one of 45 pre-need firms—reduced to less than half from the 100 or so in the industry's heyday in the 1970s and 1980s—selling education, pension and life plans to mostly salaried employees, who pay a premium in return for which the company prepares for their financial needs at a specified period in the future.

PPI, which belongs to the Yuchengco group, can actually claim to be a pioneer in the education pre-need plan industry, which many had hailed as a uniquely Philippine invention.

Enrique Sobrepeña Sr., the founder of College Assurance Plan, was part of the group's Pacific Memorial Plans Inc., the precursor of PPI.

In 1976, Sobrepeña broke away from Pacific Memorial. He took the memorial plan concept, tacked on an insurance component to it, and began selling the education pre-need plan.

Using a loophole in the Securities Act, and with the acquiescence of the Securities and Exchange Commission at the time, he was able to have his invention classified as securities—instruments giving holders the right to money or property—and not as an insurance product.

Crucial difference

The difference in classification was crucial because as sellers of securities, the education pre-need industry escaped supervision by the Insurance Commission. It was regulated by the SEC just like an ordinary manufacturing or marketing firm.

The nature of the product, however, makes it an endowment plan. A fund is bestowed on an individual, the income from which is used for the specified purpose for which the gift was intended.

The problem was that, at the time, the SEC had no capability to supervise the pre-need industry so that many practices, which would have never passed the Insurance Code, were allowed to prevail, resulting in the problems besetting the industry now.

For instance, the most significant issue in the conflict between plan holders and the pre-need companies is the valuation formula that is used to make the yield assumptions when actuaries project the earnings of investments in the companies' reserve fund.

"The industry has been aggressive in assuming fairly high yield assumptions of from 12 to 15 percent. By contrast, insurance companies are never allowed to make assumptions of more than 6 percent," said one analyst.

This may have been true when times were good, such as the days of the "Jobo bills" and the property boom years of the Ramos administration, but not since then, the source said.

In 1984, then Central Bank Governor Jose "Jobo" Fernandez issued a special Treasury bill that carried interest rates of 35 to 45 percent.

Deficit-prone

Too-optimistic yield assumptions coupled with understated assumptions of tuition rate increases would result in a low actual reserve liability, which determines how much the company should put into its trust fund to cover tuition payments when the plans mature. This is thought to be the reason pre-need companies' trust funds are deficit-prone.

The problem facing PPI largely concerns the traditional or open-ended education plans under which the company undertook to pay for the entire tuition of the beneficiaries when the plans matured, whatever the amount.

When tuition increases were kept at a minimum of 10 percent during the 1970s and 1980s, the education plan companies, particularly market leader College Assurance Plan, really raked it in.

But after they were deregulated in 1990, the education pre-need industry began to unravel. Between 1990 and 1995, tuition rates jumped an unprecedented 275 percent. After 1996, rates went up by 26 percent and then 35 percent.

To compound the problem, the Asian financial crisis exploded in 1997, driving down the value of the stocks, real estate and other assets deposited in the trust funds.

Shortfalls, bankruptcy

Education pre-need companies were unable to meet the high cost of tuition as many of the plans that they had sold 10 or 15 years before reached maturity. Many began incurring shortfalls in their trust funds. Others went bankrupt or simply ran off with plan holders' funds.

Some of the industry players changed tack, stopping the sale of open-ended plans altogether, offering instead the so-called fixed-value plans, which have pre-determined values on maturity.

The most spectacular failure was that of CAP, whose checks issued to more than 200 schools where its beneficiaries were enrolled in the 2004-2005 school year were rejected. On April 27, CAP was slapped with a class action suit by its estimated 780,000 plan holders.

The PPI management arguably wanted to avoid such a situation when it began the controversial moves that have driven its plan holders to despair. *(Part 3: Where will we get the money?)*

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Claudine bags first-ever acting award

By Marinel R. Cruz

CLAUDINE Barretto, who portrayed a struggling Filipino worker in Italy in the movie "Milan," won her first-ever acting award in last Saturday's Luna Awards ceremony of the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP) at the Westin Philippine Plaza in Pasay City.

Dennis Trillo received his second Best Actor trophy for playing a young gay man recruited by guerrillas to spy on Japanese soldiers in "Aishite Imasu 1941." Trillo was first heralded Best Actor by the Philippine Movie Press Club Star Awards in March.

Steel-plated watches

Aside from their Luna trophies, Barretto and Trillo each received a steel-plated Solotempo watch from Bulgari. They also get the chance to drive, for one month, four different models of cars provided by BMW Philippines.

The FAP has christened its annual awards for cinematic excellence the Luna.

BasFilm Production's "Aishite Imasu 1941" bagged the most number of Luna awards this year, including the highly coveted Best Picture trophy.

Joel Lamangan won the Best Director plum. He bested Olivia Lamasan ("Milan"), Cesar Montano ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), Eric Matti ("Pa-Siyam"), Laurice Guillen ("Santa Santita") and Maryo J. delos Reyes ("Naglalayag").

Jay Manalo, who plays Trillo's Japanese lover Ichiru in "Aishite Imasu 1941," won Best Supporting Actor. Manalo beat Eddie Garcia ("Mano Po 3: My Love"), Ronnie Lazaro ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), Johnny Delgado ("Santa Santita") and Ryan Eigenmann ("Milan").

Jaclyn's fourth

Jaclyn Jose was heralded Best Supporting Actress for her work in "Naglalayag." The award was Jose's fourth trophy from the FAP.

Joey Luna's work on the World War II epic drama was heralded Best Production Design, while Marya Ignacio is this year's Best Editor, also for "Aishite Imasu 1941."

Cesar Montano's "Pangahoy sa Suba (Call of the River)" bagged three Luna awards, but none of them were for any acting category.

The film, which was shot entirely in Cebuano and with Bohol's pristine Loboc River as backdrop, won for Ely Cruz the Best Cinematographer award.

Cris Vertido won the Best Screenplay award, while Nonong Buencamino took home the Best Music plum, also for "Panaghoy sa Suba."

From among its four nominations, Star Cinema's "Feng Shui" won only one award—Best Sound for Albert Idioma.

The Fernando Poe Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed upon movie producer Marichu Vera Perez.

She was in charge of production design at Sampaguita Pictures during its heyday in the '60s. Vera Perez is the eldest of seven children of the late legendary Dr. Jose R. Perez.

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Cop guns down businessman over traffic

By Margaux C. Ortiz

IT ALL started with a minor traffic incident.

A Manila policeman allegedly shot to death a businessman during an altercation over traffic in Manila the other night.

Western Police District (WPD) homicide chief Senior Insp. Dominador Arevalo identified the suspect as PO3 Roman Rodriguez of WPD Station 7.

Victim Luis Fredeluces, 54, of 4020 Dangal St., Bacood, Sta. Mesa, was declared dead on arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila, according to investigator PO3 Romeo Velarde.

PO2 Arturo Ladia, the suspect's colleague, was also hurt when a stray bullet hit him in the leg during the incident.

According to investigators, Rodriguez, of 316 Altura Ext., Sta. Mesa, was driving a Toyota Vios (XRC-464) along Valenzuela Street at about 11:30 p.m. when his car almost collided with that of the son of Fredeluces, Ryan.

Rodriguez, who had Ladia as his passenger, then chased Ryan's car until they reached Bagumbayan Street, Velarde said.

The policeman blocked the car of Ryan near the latter's house then stepped out to confiscate his license.

When barangay chair Efren Agustin and Fredeluces interceded for Ryan, Rodriguez reportedly got angry and shot Fredeluces in the head with a 9mm pistol.

The suspect then indiscriminately fired another shot in an apparent bid to scare off bystanders, but Ladia got hit in the leg with a stray bullet.

Velarde said the suspect fled after bringing the victims to the hospital.

Widening of MacArthur Highway starts

By Leila B. Salaverria

FEARING massive traffic jams along the already busy highway, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is appealing to the mayors of towns where the MacArthur Highway passes through to help them manage traffic once construction for its widening begins today.

DPWH undersecretary Manuel Bonoan said in a recent interview that the project would add to traffic congestion along the highway.

"We've asked the mayors for help in ensuring that everything would flow as smoothly as possible," he said.

The portion of the MacArthur Highway that will be widened will stretch from Meycauayan, Bulacan, to Tarlac.

According to Bonoan, the areas along the major roadway that are most likely to be hit with traffic congestion once construction begins are those near public markets, government offices and schools.

The MacArthur Highway has been especially busy in the past months since the North Luzon Expressway raised its fees by as much as 400 percent. Motorists have been turning to the MacArthur because its use is free.

Abolish MMDA move gets OK

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT MIGHT even be good.

Yielding to Congress, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority yesterday said the proposal to abolish the agency might even make it better.

"Congress may now weigh whether what we need is an abolition or a strengthening of the MMDA charter," said MMDA Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna.

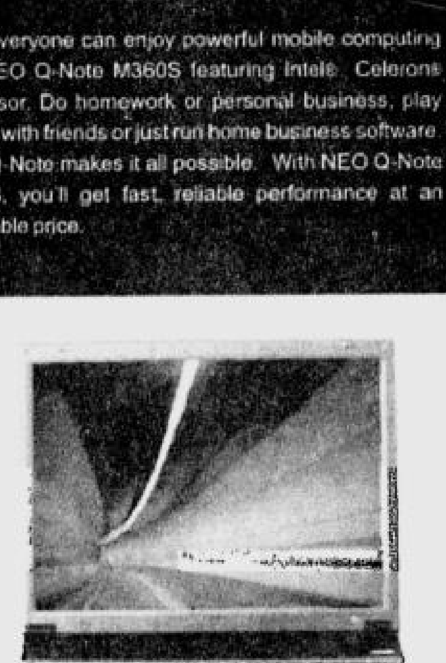
Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. recently filed a bill that seeks to abolish the MMDA in light of doubts on the agency's mandate.

Locsin's bill seeks to repeal the 1995 law that created the MMDA as a metropolitan body that would administer the region's traffic situation and flood control.

Welcoming the measure, Lacuna said Congress, in discussing the proposal, would have the chance to revisit the provisions of the 10-year-old MMDA law, and consider the agency's proposal to amend its charter to better delineate its powers from those of local government units.

"They could look at both proposals then look at the pros and cons. But we believe there is really a need for the MMDA," Lacuna said.

He explained that the MMDA was created to address the urban problems of choked traffic and invitable flooding, wo persistent problems which "do not have boundaries."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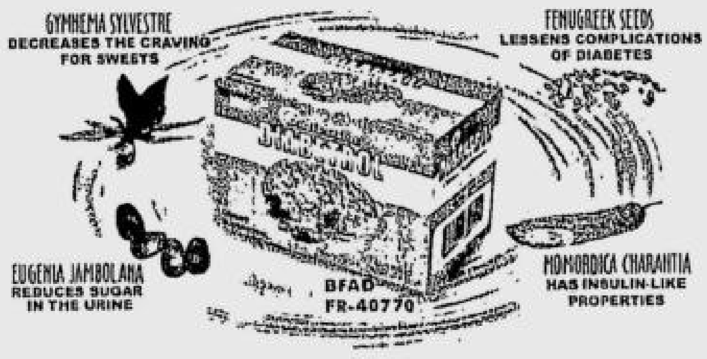
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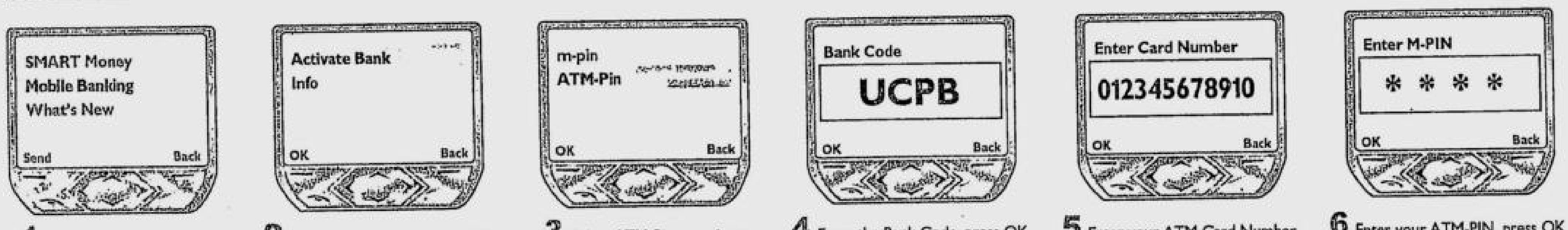
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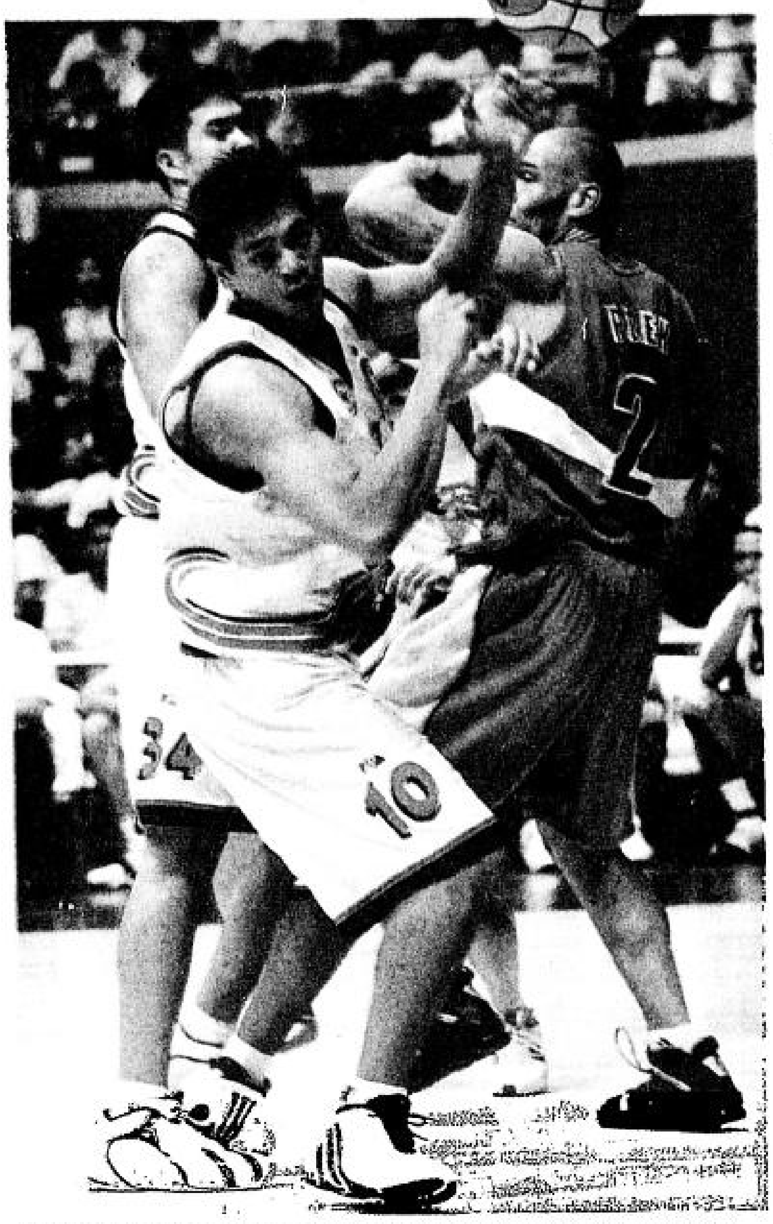
Adducul impresses as Kings tame Tigers



ROMEL Adducul and Migs Noble of Barangay Ginebra scramble for possession against Alaska's Ali Peelc. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAMES WEDNESDAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:45 p.m.—Talk N Text vs San Miguel Beer
7:35 p.m.—Alaska vs Sta. Lucia Realty

By June Navarro

NO wonder teams are craving for the services of Romel Adducul.

The Barangay Ginebra banger shone for the second straight game in the absence of Eric Menk, leading the Kings to a 90-84 win over the Coca-Cola Tigers in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Adducul had 16 points and nine rebounds, a sterling follow-up to his 17-point, 14-rebound effort in a winning effort against San Miguel that broke the Kings' six-game losing spell early this week. Adducul is filling in for Menk, who is currently suspended pending the completion of his citizenship documents.

"He's showing his worth," said Kings coach Siot Tanquingcen, whose wards climbed to 7-8 in a three-way tie with Purefoods and Red Bull.

"And one good thing about Romel is that he's improving," Tanquingcen added while dismissing talks that Adducul is already bound for another team.

Shell, among others, had expressed interest on the 6-foot-6 pivotman but has yet to strike a deal to get Adducul.

"As far as I know there's no formal offer on the table and that's contrary to what I've read in the papers," said Tanquingcen.

In the second game, Chris Burgess' monster performance—26 points and 23 boards—powered San Miguel to a 95-84 victory over Shell.

Danny Seigle unloaded 21 markers as the Beermen tied Alaska at No. 2 with a 9-6 slate. The Turbo Charger slipped to 6-10.

Andre Brown also had a big game, unloading 27 points and pulling down 17 rebounds.

The Kings built a 78-59 spread on Mark Caguioa's torrid shooting and the timely incursion of Brown and Adducul, but needed a bail-out jumper from Rodney Santos in the final 36 seconds to avert a collapse.

John Arigo hurt his left ankle after colliding against Migs Noble and was taken out of the court with the Kings already ahead, 39-28, four minutes and 12 seconds left before intermission.

Ali Peek and Rob Wainwright combined to bring the Tigers within 84-82 before Santos hit the jumper that stopped the Coca-Cola rally.

The Tigers fell to 5-10.

The scores:

First Game

GINEBRA 90—Brown 27, Caguioa 17, Adducul 16, Santos 12, Salvacion 6, Dimaunahan 6, Noble 4, Echavez 2.

COCA-COLA 84—Sanford 23, Peek 18, Wainwright 12, Abarrientos 8, Avenido 5, Arigo 5, Antonio 5, Singson 3, Juinio 3, Chia 2, Ramos 0.

Quarters: 26-20, 43-35, 73-57, 90-84.

Second Game

SAN MIGUEL 95—Burgess 26, Seigle 21, Hontiveros 13, Racela 11, Belasco 8, Lopez 6, Mente 4, Peña 4, Ildefonso 2.

SHELL 84—Williams 17, Dela Cruz 16, Tubid 15, Ferreria 11, Mamaril 8, Alvarez 7, Calagulo 7, Sotto 2, Yap 1.

Quarters: 19-26, 40-43, 64-58, 95-84

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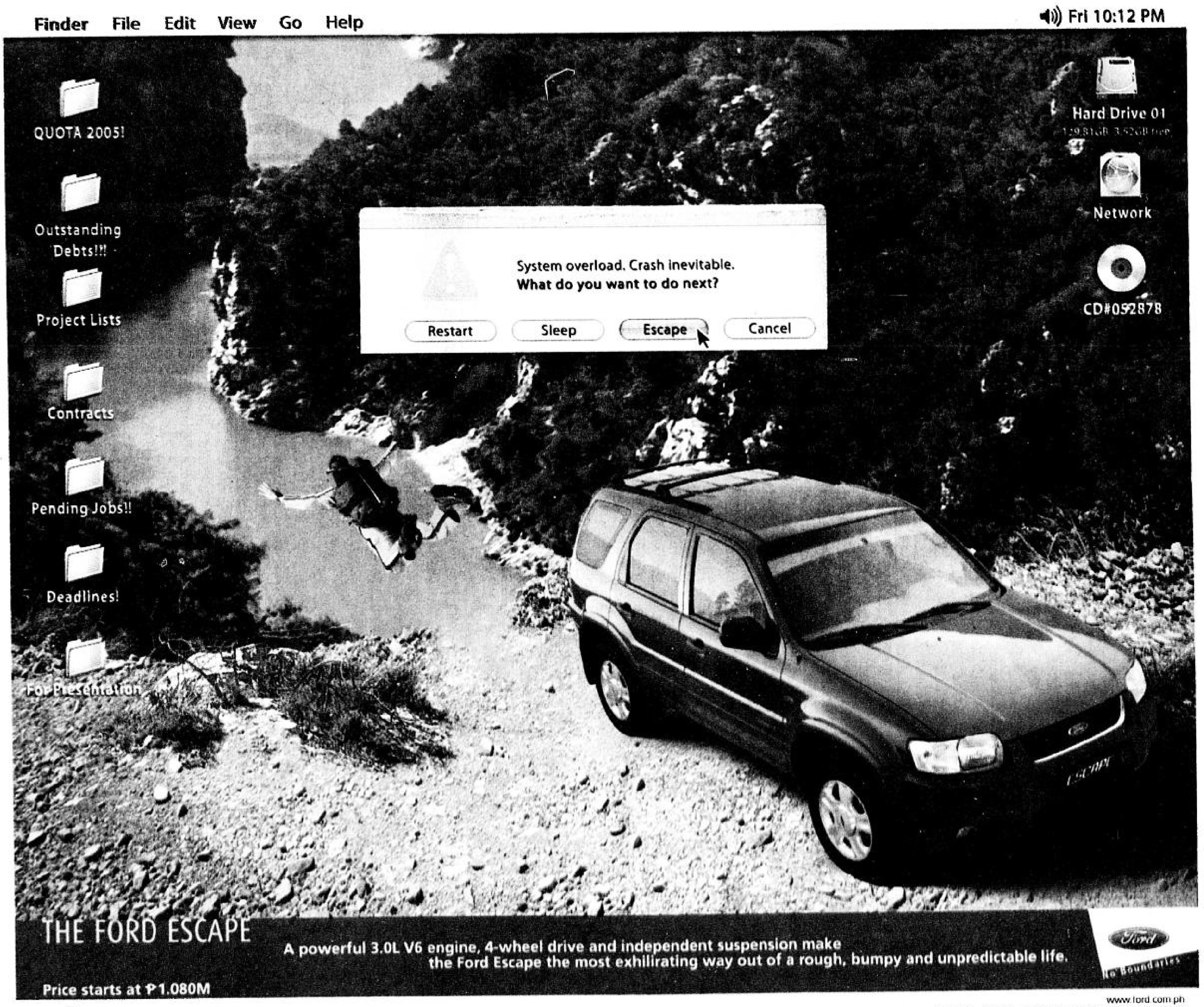

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Draw Date : April 18, 2005

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Samsung E600 Cellphone

Venecio J. Lim Jr., Cavite
Samsung V50 Digital Camera

Mark Joseph Cadion, Cavite
Samsung HD 748 DVD Player

Jerry Cagas, Quezon City
Magic Sing

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Arevalo nails Guam net finals

AREVALO: Two title chances

GUAM—Top seed Czarina Mae Arevalo of the Philippines survived compatriot Michelle Pang, 6-3,,7-6 (5), yesterday to advance into the women's singles final of the 2005 Guam International Tennis Open at the Hilton Guam Resort and Spa in Tumon Bay here.

Arevalo, spearhead of the Philippine women's team for the Southeast Asian Games in Manila in November, shoots for the crown today against Japan's Sayaka Umeda, who downed compatriot Chihi Kobayashi, 7-6 (5), 6-2, in the other semifinal encounter.

The champion gets $1,200.

Arevalo later teamed up with Filipino-American Denise Dy to defeat American Kay Know and Rosalie Cao Tapu, 6-1, 6-0, and nail her second finals berth in the tournament.

Arevalo and Dy, fresh off their Federation Cup stint last month in India, will face Kobayashi and Marie Watanabe in the finals. The Japanese pair overcame compatriots Sayomi Orito and Hiroko Takura in the other final four match, 7-6 (5), 6-1.

In the men's singles, Filipino second seed Kyle Joshua Dandan retired due to leg cramps in the third set, handing Japanese underdog Ayumo Kishimoto a 6-1, 3-6, 2-0 (ret.) victory in their semifinal match.

Kishimoto will meet top seed Australian John James, who breezed past Japanese Atsushi Deguchi, 6-0, 6-2.

The top-seeded pair of Dandan and James had earlier booked a semifinal berth in the doubles after routing Stefan Duesing and Brian Potts, 6-1, 6-0.

The Filipinos next face Japan's Hiroyuki Nakamura and Yutaka Saito, who rallied past countrymen Shunsuke Kasama and Hiroaki Shiokawa, 4-6, 6-1, 7-5.

RP's Flores keeps WBO Asia Pacific fly crown

REXON Flores knocked down Indonesian Alwy Alhabsy of Indonesia twice and retained his World Boxing Organization Asia Pacific flyweight title by unanimous decision Saturday night at the Olivarez Sports Center in Sucat, Parañaque.

Judges Edwin Sese gave the bout to the 22-year-old Flores at 117-109, Rudy Perez saw it at 119-109, while Virgilio Garcia scored it 116-110.

The Bebot Elorde-managed Flores, currently ranked WBO No. 6, improved to 14-2-2 (win-loss-draw) with 7 knockouts while Alhabsy absorbed his fifth loss in 27 fights.

WBO Asia Pacific chair Leon Panoncillo was at ringside.

The Indon went down twice in the third round but was able to recover in the latter stages of the fight.

Panoncillo had earlier announced that a Flores victory would put him in a good position to vie for the WBO world title soon. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Pacquiao is risky model for GMA

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HE was definitely defeated—but his worshippers have refused to look at Manny Pacquiao as the real loser in his last fight.

The beating dealt by Mexican legend Erik Morales on the so-called national sports treasure was cruel and clear as the heat wave now stalking the Manila of our disaffections.

But there are people here, mainly in wet markets and in the endless rows of sidewalk stalls, who claim that Pacquiao either got cheated or he took a dive.

Meanwhile, other fans in other places continue to wonder if the mafia had had a hand in the Pacquiao defeat.

They've all been misinformed.

Pacquiao lost that fight, pure and simple, because he was not ready enough to face a superior foe.

***

No, correction, that conjecture was rather tame.

Pacquiao, eager and brave, lost because he was incompetent.

He willingly took a crucial test for which he was not technically prepared.

That moment of truth at the MGM Grand Garden Arena on March 19 had called for Pacquiao to soar high, develop wings on his heels, and surpass himself.

He stayed flat on the floor and, although able to connect with his punches, there was nothing of the blazing attack he had bragged to mount.

In fact, when the need came for him to slug it out, he would turn his back from his foe and beat a frantic retreat.

He was very awkward doing this.

***

The raging Pinoy hero that met Morales was dull, shallow, often lost.

Maybe sports authorities, like those from the Games and Amusements Board, should conduct an information drive to set the record straight.

Look, if people continue to live with the absurd idea that Pacquiao, despite his inferior stand, had passed his big test, this could have a terrible effect on the hungry *masa*.

Our poor countrymen, using that faulty Pacquiao model, could just continue walking into ventures and challenges with the blind belief they could succeed despite inferior basics.

The Pinoy could just plod on and do a Pacquiao, without first properly preparing for the big test

***

It could be silly as jumping into a swimming pool without checking if there's water in it.

Pacquiao had drowned in his own ignorance.

He came to the Morales fight improperly prepared, convinced that he could indeed do it swift and easy.

Yes, he had wrongly suspected that Morales would be easier to beat than Marco Antonio Barrera, the reigning WBC super featherweight champ whom Pacquiao mauled and stopped in 2003.

It's odd but Pacquiao had an entirely wrong idea of what exam he would be taking.

"*Kung si Barrera, pinaglaruan ko lang, si* Morales *pa kaya* (If I had toyed with Barrera, what more with Morales)," Pacquiao told this reporter in a taped interview last January in California, when he started training for his last fight.

That statement brought goose pimples for its shallowness, the reason we had refused to make it public.

***

This could only mean that, although he trained hard enough, Pacquiao had all the while thought he would be going on a picnic versus Morales.

He paid dearly for it.

He proved incompetent against a sharp macho machine who came at his best.

Pacquiao walked into a massacre.

In its singularity, the fight would often resemble a session between a teacher and pupil, with Pacquiao repeatedly failing to provide answers to on-the-spot quizzes.

Later, it became clear that the fight was also decided on the quality of manhood and deeper character.

Pacquiao may indeed be fiery, flamboyant, but Morales was decidedly magnificent.

Anyway, the painful lessons Pacquiao had learned for his incompetence should reach all the way to Malacañang, where the top tenant obviously believes she's championing the cause of the *masa*, who are either dying or getting sick due to hunger and crippling national mismanagement.

***

(MR. CRISPA: We got this text message yesterday from *kumpadre* Jun Nonato of Pasig: "Gud day pare, happy birthday ni BOSS bukas, 82 na sya." Boss, of course, was the legendary Danny Floro, manager of the fabulous Crispa Redmanizers, the first great team in the PBA. Danny was the bigger, bubblier half of the winningest coach-manager partnership he had formed with the great Baby Dalupan. We offer a thank you-prayer, grateful to the Lord for a guy of Mr. Floro's unforgettable kindness.)

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Makati, Pampanga dispute 9-ball title

TEAM Makati and Team Pampanga clash today for the inaugural championship of the TM Philippine 9-Ball Champions League at the SM Supermall in Manila.

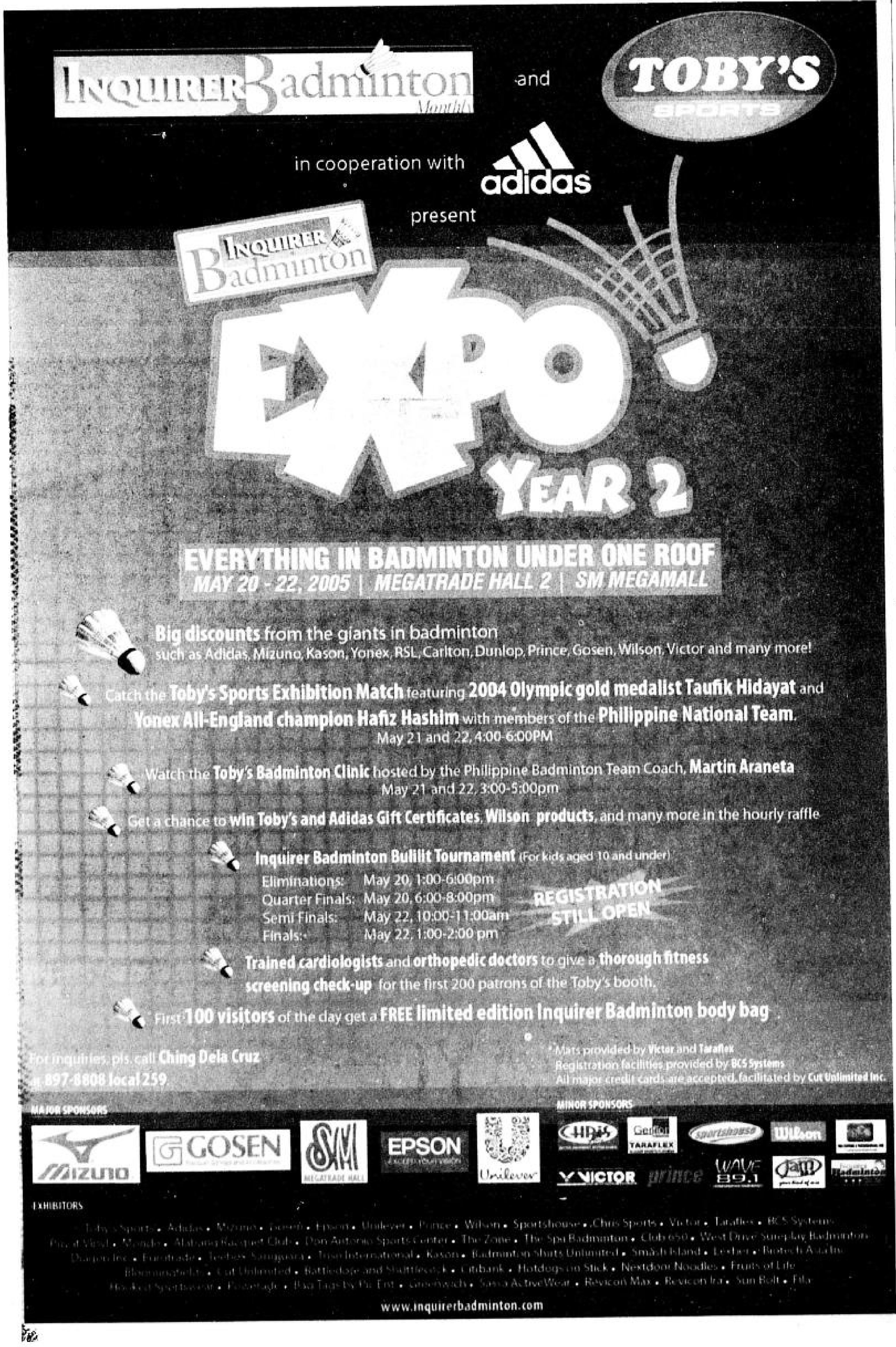
The games, presented by Touch Mobile and backed by Brunswick, Accel, Aqua Ronz and SM Supermalls, will start at 1 p.m.

Interesting matches spice up the finals with Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Victor Arpelleda and 2004 Philippine 9-Ball Open champion Antonio Gabica teaming up against two of the best players to come out of the TM 9-Ball Champions League.

Jharome Peña of Team Makati, 22, and Jundel Mazon of Team Cavite, 28, the leading contenders for the TM Taco Master Award, are expected to pose a stiff challenge to the veterans Arpelleda and Gabica.

Toni Anne Nobleza of Team Cavite, frontrunner after three weeks in the TM individual award, goes head-to-head with Team Manila anchor Ruby Merces in a race-to-seven match featuring the league's top two female players.

Match highlights are shown in the TM9Ball, Ang Bagong Sibol program which airs every Thursday and Friday at 9:30 p.m. on IBC 13. The show, hosted by former cager Peter Martin and race car driver Filipino-Finnish Pia Boren, is a joint production of RocketMan Enterprises Inc. of Ramon Tuason and Jemah Television.



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Montecillo jungolf fires off tomorrow

MIKO Yee and Princess Superal will set out as the early favorites when the inaugural Philippine Junior Golf Championships: The Montecillo Cup fires off tomorrow at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Yee, runner-up to Tonton Asistio in the recent Junior World qualifying, heads the boys' field while Superal leads the cast in the girls' division of the tourney which serves as the other half of two major events in the Samsung Jungolf Tour.

But the two will have their hands full against a horde of challengers as the local jungolfers tackle two different formats—stroke play for the first two rounds Tuesday and Wednesday and match play for the event proper on Thursday and Friday, in their quest for the top awards.

Also sponsoring the Montecillo Cup being staged in honor of jungolf founder Amalia Montecillo are Philippine Airlines, Unilever, Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdogs, Titleist through the Dynamic Sports Corp., the First Gentleman Sports Foundation and Toyota Motors Phils. Inc.

Competing are the country's top bets in various international events slated in the next three months, including the Junior World championships, the Asia-Pacific championships, the Optimist International, the Pepsi Little People and US Kids world championship.

The Montecillo Cup will be a severe test of skill and endurance for the local kids especially the boys. The format calls for the top 16 in boys' play and top eight in girls' action advancing to the match play format. The boys' final will be for 36 holes and 18 holes for the girls'.

Asistio is skipping the Montecillo Cup since he's set to join the Philippine Open to be held this week at Mt. Malarayat. However, several seasoned players like Justin Tambunting, Miko Alejandro, Nonoy Negrido and Wolen Superal will be joining Yee in the seeded list.

The girls' field is expected to include sisters Linnel and Debbie de Villa, Regan de Guzman, Cyna Rodriguez, Bambee dela Paz, Paulina Sotto and Katya dela Cruz.

For inquiries, call Gay at the JGFP office at 8939599.

Jungolfer Arevalo nails first hole-in-one

SIX-YEAR-OLD Abegail Arevalo, part of the RP team to the Junior World championships in July, aced the 85-yard, par-3 ninth hole of The Riviera Executive Course for her first hole-in-one. She achieved the feat using a US Kids' Golf six-iron anda Titleist ball during the practice round of a jungolf tournament last Tuesday. Abegail went on to win the 54-hole event with rounds of 69, 66 and 65.

Lady Stags gun for 2nd victory vs FEU tossers

GAMES TODAY (*Lyceum gym*)
3 p.m.—Far Eastern vs. San Sebastian
5 p.m.—Lyceum vs Ateneo

SAN SEBASTIAN shoots for a second straight win today when it clashes with debuting Far Eastern in the Shakey's V-League at the Lyceum gym.

Fresh off a stirring 10-25, 25-21, 25-22, 25-14 conquest of the powerhouse Santo Tomas Tigresses on Saturday, the Lady Stags are fancied to prevail in their 3 p.m. collision with the Lady Tamaraws.

Lyceum tries to pin a second straight loss on newcomer Ateneo in the 5 p.m. game.

Cherry Macatangay, Jennifer Bohawe, Cecil Chavas and Ann Latigay will be the players to watch again for SSC as it tries to occupy unfamiliar territory in the event sponsored by Shakey's Pizza and organized by Sports Vision Management Group, Inc.

Far Eastern will be bannered by May Rovira with support to come from the likes of Genelyn Alemania, Khristine [illegible], Dianne [illegible], Josephine Cafranca, Mary Ann [illegible] [illegible] Torres.

Ateneo lost to bitter rival La Salle, 18-25, 23-25, 20-25, in the inaugurals of the event also backed by IBC 13, Jemah Television, ACCEL and Mikasa.

Highlights of the matches will be shown over IBC Channel 13 tomorrow starting at 7 p.m.

Miñoza likely to miss fabled RP Open again

By the **INQUIRER Sports Staff**

FRANKIE Miñoza walked out of last year's Philippine Open in disgust. The country's finest shotmaker will most likely skip the much-awaited event for the second straight year.

The Bukidnon native's name remains missing from the initial roster of local entries released by the organizing NGAP, four days before the $200,000 Asian Tour event tees off at the Mount Malarayat course in Lipa City.

FRANKIE Miñoza: His name not on the roster

Retired admiral Luisito Fernandez, the NGAP secretary-general and chair of the organizing committee, said he tried to get in touch with Miñoza through his swing coach and close friend Roger Retuerto last week but the Filipino star had already left for the Macau Open.

The 45-year-old Miñoza, now a regular in the Asian Tour, tied for 20th in Macau with a two-under 282 total after a final round 70 yesterday.

NGAP president Benny Gopez, with whom Miñoza had a falling out last year, had invited the player in a letter as early last February and the association, according to Fernandez, has yet to receive a reply.

Miñoza withdrew at the 11th hour last year after the NGAP denied exemptions to two of his amateur Japanese friends, relatives of the man who helped sponsor his stint in the Japan Tour, to the Open's 88th edition at The Riviera.

The winner in 1998 at The Couples course, Miñoza is in 24th spot in the Asian Tour Order of Merit with earnings of over $55,000 in just five tournaments.

Miñoza has two top 10 finishes this year, one of them a fourth place tie with Scotland's Colin Montogomerie in the Standard Chartered Indonesian Open in Jakarta won by Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant.

He finished one stroke ahead of Wiratchant in Macau.

Fernandez said he was still hoping for the last-minute entry of Miñoza, who undoubtedly is still the country's top pro.

"The Asian Tour was supposed to give us 104 names as direct exempts," Fernandez explained. "They only gave us 103 and we are hoping that the final name is Frankie's."

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TRIPLE THREAT

Philippine hopes high in 89th tilt

LIPA CITY—Three years ago, three young amateurs wanting nothing but to uplift Philippine pride achieved what many thought was impossible—a top three finish in the prestigious World Amateur Golf championships in Malaysia.

With two of them now pros and the other hands-down the country's amateur ace, hopes for a local victory are high when the 89th edition of the Philippine Open tees off May 19-22 at the Mt. Malarayat here.

Angelo Que, an Asian Tour winner in Vietnam last year, Jerome Delariarte, the Country Club champ, and last year's RP Open runner-up Juvic Pagunsan will be in a reunion of sorts as they battle the best the region has to offer.

89TH
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That World Am team, captained by retired admiral Luisito Fernandez, finished tied for third with powerhouse Australia behind the United States and France to match the country's worthiest effort against the best in the globe.

Fernandez is now directly involved in putting together the Open, and the secretary-general of the organizing NGAP can't help but look back at 2002 with fondness.

He's also looking at the coming $200,000 event with a lot of optimism and is naturally pinning the country's hopes on his former wards.

"I'd like to see a Filipino win it," Fernandez said. "And I'd like to think that our boys who gave us honor in Malaysia have a strong chance."

The other notable Filipinos in the field include former winners Cassius Casas, Gerald Rosales and Robert Pactolerin, as well as Antonio Lascuña, Danny Zarate and Carito Villaroman.

The 26-year-old Pagunsan boosted his stock by emerging as the best Filipino in last year's RP Open behind Edward Michaels, and the power-hitting Bacolod native would like nothing less than another big performance before he turns pro.

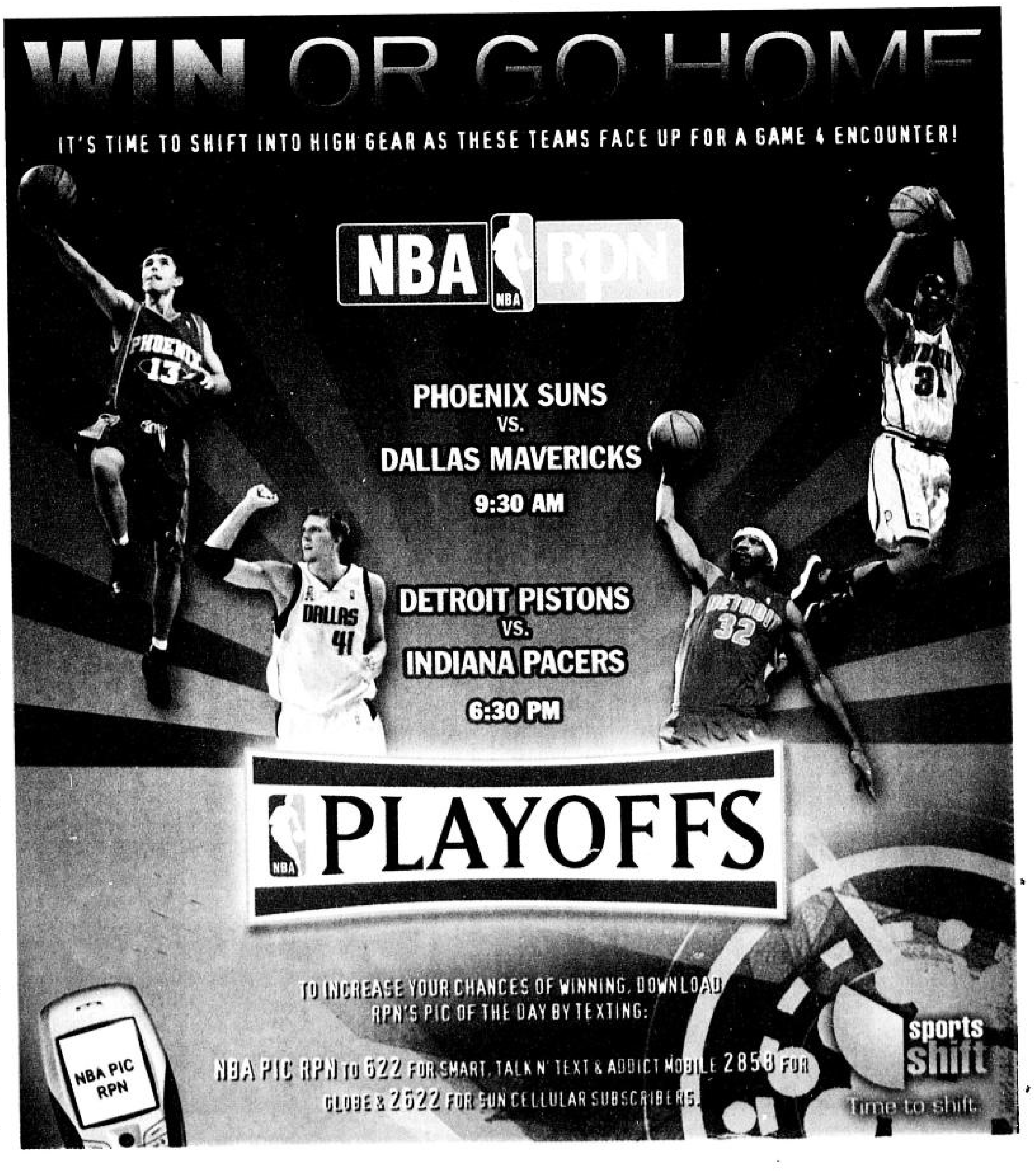
Que is the most exposed Filipino internationally, and will be coming into the event being presented by PAL, ICTSI, San Miguel Corp. and Konica U-bix fresh off good showing in the Dynasty Cup.

Delariarte scored a breakthrough in the P5 million TCC and is definitely a favorite in the event also backed by the Hanjin Group, Pagcor, Aboitiz Group, Petron, PCSO and the DOT with the Lima City Hotel the official residence.

The newly inaugurated, 32-room Malarayat Hotel will be the official home of the local amateurs, which will also include Artemio Murakami, Michael Bibat, Jay Bayron, Boyet Saragoza and Jun Bernis.

Richard Gomez and Joey Marquez head the celebrities seeing action in the pro-am on May 18 (Wednesday). A His & Hers pair of Constellation watches from Omega and a horde of home theater items will be raffled off in the Celebrity Pro-Am with Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto to award the prizes

The 24-room Mt. Malarayat Inn will house—for free—the tournament staff, television crew and media that will cover the event.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Miami sweeps Washington

WASHINGTON—The preliminary stuff is over in the Miami Heat's playoff run.

Eddie Jones made a 3-pointer from the right wing with 14.9 seconds remaining Saturday, thwarting a late Washington Wizards rally and helping the Heat to a 99-95 victory that wrapped up the Eastern Conference semifinal series in four games.

Miami swept two teams it also swept in the regular season, completing the job with Dwyane Wade solidifying his case as a phenomenon-on-the-rise, with Jones hitting the winning shot, and with Shaquille O'Neal sitting on the bench in a dapper dark gray suit.

Jones' basket gave Miami a 97-95 lead and ended a streak of 16 straight misses for the Heat, who blew an 11-point lead over the final six minutes.

Washington's Larry Hughes attempted to tie the game with a drive to the basket, but Alonzo Mourning blocked the shot with 8.3 seconds remaining. Wade then made two free throws for the final points.

Wade scored 22 of his career playoff-high 42 points in a dazzling third quarter in which he went 7-for-7 from the field and 8-for-8 from the free-throw line. He broke franchise records for points in a playoff quarter and a playoff game and scored 31, 31 and 42 in the last three games of the series.

The Wizards simply could not stop Wade, whether he was working himself open for a jumper or grabbing an offensive rebound and going back up for a dunk. He finished 13-for-22 from the field and 16-for-17 from the line.

"It was just about taking what the defense gave me," Wade said. "I had confidence in my pull-up, and I was taking that. Then the defense started getting confused, and I was able to get to the lane and make the basket down low."

O'Neal missed his second straight game with a deep thigh bruise that has hobbled him for several weeks. The sweep will give him a minimum of eight days to recover, with the conference finals against Detroit or Indiana not scheduled to start until May 23, at the earliest.

"It means we get a lot of rest," Wade said. "We're just going to try to go get healthy. This team is on a mission. Whoever our next opponent is in the next round is going to be tough."

"We're going to need a lot from Shaq," Wade added. "We want him to get healthy. We're going to ride him when he gets back. We know when he comes back he's going to be hungry. You know what happens when you have a mad Shaq."

A healthy O'Neal wasn't necessary against New Jersey in the first round or Washington in the second. The Heat went 15-0 against the two teams and are the first team in NBA history to sweep the same two teams in the playoffs that it swept during the regular season. Miami has also won 12 straight against the Washington over two seasons.

Damon Jones added 19 points from the Heat, including 12 points in the pivotal third quarter when he made all four of his 3-point attempts. Miami outscored Washington 40-25 in the third, opening an 11-point lead that became 13 when Eddie Jones opened the fourth with a basket. *AP*

Sorenstam pulls away

SORENSTAM. AP

STOCKBRIDGE, Geórgia—Annika Sorenstam stretched her lead to a staggering 10 strokes and virtually assured her 60th career victory with one round left at the Chick-fil-A Charity Championship on Saturday.

Defending champion Jennifer Rosales shot 71 and was 17 strokes behind Sorenstam, and one week after ending Sorenstam's streak with a win at Kingsmill, Cristie Kerr found herself 13 strokes off the lead going to the final round.

Only two players in LPGA Tour history have rallied from such a daunting deficit on the final day, and they just happen to be two of the greatest in women's golf history—Sorenstam in 2001 and Mickey Wright in 1964.

Sorenstam is the one in front this time, and she doesn't have anyone nearly so impressive in her rearview mirror.

"I've just got to play my own game," she said. "The last thing I want to do is get involved with what everyone else is doing."

Despite three bogeys—her first of the week—Sorenstam managed a 5-under 67 that extended her six-stroke lead at the halfway point. A three-round total of 198 left her at 18 under.

Silvia Cavalleri put up the best score of the day, 65, but that was only good enough to pull the Italian within 11 strokes of Sorenstam. Emilee Klein shot 68 and was the closest challenger at 208.

Cavalleri, who played with Sorenstam for the first two rounds, was realistic about her chances.

"She just doesn't make any mistakes," Cavalleri said. "She is going to be very, very tough. Obviously, finishing behind Annika would already be good. She is so far ahead." *AP*

Rookie nears first PGA crown

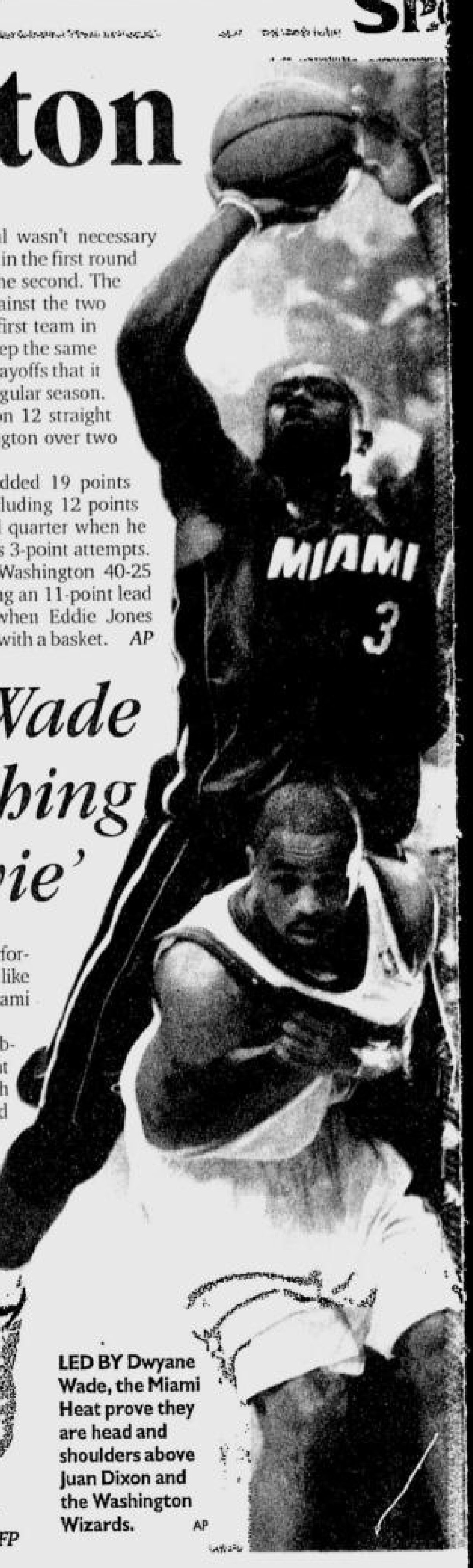
IRVING, Texas—Sean O'Hair is not interested in rehashing his long, troubled road to becoming a 22-year-old rookie on the US PGA Tour. All that matters now is finishing it with a victory in the Byron Nelson Championship.

Prompted to turn pro at age 17 by a father who saw him merely as a commodity, O'Hair showed poise beyond his years on Saturday with a 3-under 67 while playing in the final group to take a one-shot lead over British Open champion Todd Hamilton.

"Being in that situation for the first time, I'm pretty happy with the way I handled myself," said O'Hair, who finished at 12-under 198.

O'Hair was one of the best juniors in the United States, driven by a father who made him run a mile for every bogey, told him to turn pro a year before he finished high school, and had him sign a contract giving the father 10 percent of all future earnings. After failing against competition over his head, O'Hair cut ties to his father and hasn't spoken to him in almost two years. *AP*

'Watching Wade is like watching a good movie'



LED BY Dwyane Wade, the Miami Heat prove they are head and shoulders above Juan Dixon and the Washington Wizards. AP

WASHINGTON—An amazing 42-point performance from Dwyane Wade that looked like something out of "Star Wars" sparked the Miami Heat past Washington, 99-95.

Superstar center Shaquille O'Neal was absent for the second game in a row with a right thigh bruise but "The Force" clearly was with Wade, who shot perfectly in a 22-point third quarter.

"I felt like I couldn't miss," Wade said. "I came out and started attacking. I got a couple easy shots. I got comfortable. You start making shots, you get into a zone.

"It felt like I was in 'The Matrix'. I just couldn't miss."

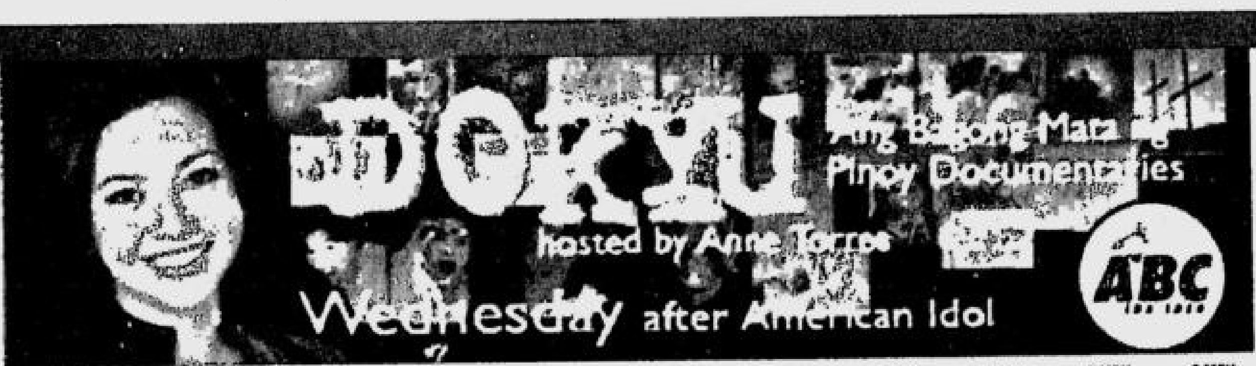
Wade's 7-for-7 effort from the field and 8-for-8 free throw shooting in the third quarter was as unstoppable as Neo from "The Matrix" and as devastating as Darth Vader in the newest "Star Wars" film.

"Have you ever been to a good movie where the plot gets good and you don't want to get up and go get popcorn? I've found myself that way 65 or 70 times watching that guy in action," teammate Damon Jones said of Wade. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Monday, May 16, 2005



DOKYU
Ang Bagong Mata ng Pinoy Documentaries
hosted by Anne Torres
Wednesday after American Idol
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	Opids	TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Hiram	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	Anime Ring Kasho				Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice		Fear Factor		Big News	Pops!		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	Sweet Eighteen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Dama	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM) Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi		
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Scare Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Sex & the City	Road Trip	
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		Johnnie Walker Classic Highlights					IBC News Tonite	Linawin Natin	
JackTV	Street Smarts	Worst Case Scenario		Wwe Heat		WWE Velocity		Cheat	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Kid Notorious	Comedy Central Presents	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	OPM MYX Countdown		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C.		Queer eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight Weekend		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2	
Cinema One		Time & Tide				Ms. Kristina Moran				Antipolo Massacre				Himala		Desperado, Bahala Na Ang Itaas			
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Super Gals	My MYX	Ragnarok	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Fightbox	Tru Calling		Charmed		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time
AXN		Lost		The Contender		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		The Contender		CSI Miami (Season II)		CSI Miami (Season II)	
Star World	Weird TV.	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	The King Of Queens	Still Standing	Grounded For Life/ Yes Dear	Frasier	Boston Public		Friends	The King Of Queens
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary	Be The Creature		Egypt Detectives: Mystery Of The First Egyptians	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials/When Animals Attack		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild/ Animals Like Us Polices/Medi-gna Adoption/ Tool Use	Wildlife Diary
Solar Sports		IBF Thailand Open '05		ATP World Team C'ship '05						Sagupaan		NBA Jam L923	NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs Semi-finals Game4					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	E! True Hollywood Story		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Brini Maxwell Show	Modern Girl's Guide	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO		Catch Me If You Can (3.10 PM)					Multiplicity (5.35 PM)				The Challenge (2003)			The Matrix Revolutions				Normal (11:05PM)	
Star Movies			Buried Lies				It's A Very Merry Muppet Christmas Movie			Spanish Apartment (6.55 PM)				Double Impact				Jet Lag (10:50PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Spanish Football League 2004/05				English Premier Football League 2004/05				English Premier League Highlights 2004/05		In The Driver's Seat	Sportscenter Asia	UEFA Champs League Magazine Show	2004 Spinvitational Table Tennis Championships	Pool/Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Dead Air			Plots With A View (5.15 PM)				The Sum Of All Fears				The Life Of David Gale				A Perfect World (11:05PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Wife Swap		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched			Wife Swap					Just Cause (10:35PM)		Wire In The Blood
Discovery Channel		American Chopper		Mummy Autopsy		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Civilisations	
Sports Plus				Blue Angels Classic Day3					Inside the PGA	Italia Serie A Highlights 15		Italia Serie A				Eds Byron Nelson C'ship Day4			

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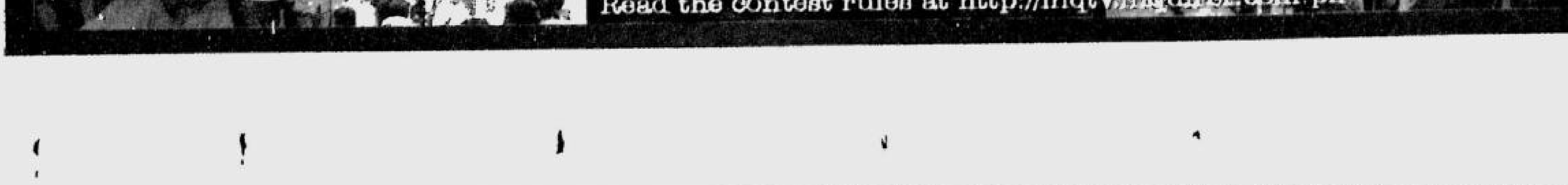

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Winky flaunts Wright stuff, destroys Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—In the biggest fight of his long career, Winky Wright gave Peurto Rico's Felix Trinidad both a beating and a boxing lesson Saturday night to win their middleweight showdown.

Wright so dominated the fight that Trinidad won only one round on two ringside scorecards, and none on a third. He did it by negating the power that carried Trinidad to 35 knockout wins with great defense, and showing some surprising punching power of his own.

Trinidad seemed befuddled and unable to adapt, dropping a decision so lopsided that it had to damage his hopes of avenging his only other loss, to middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins.

Wright controlled the fight with his right jab, landing it at will and landing it hard. When the two got in exchanges, he landed first, and often followed it with a straight left hand that backed Trinidad up.

"I've been proving myself over and over again," Wright said. "I think he underestimated me a little bit. He didn't think I was that strong."

Wright won 120-107 on one scorecard and 119-108 on the other two. The Associated Press also had Wright winning 119-108.

"It was a tough fight. He's got a beautiful jab," Trinidad said.

No title was at stake, but there were plenty of other subplots in a fight that drew a near sellout crowd of 14,176 to the MGM Grand hotel-casino arena. Trinidad came in as the big puncher, while Wright built a reputation as a slick southpaw with the ring savvy of a veteran.

Trinidad was in the second fight of his comeback after a 29-month retirement, while Wright was fighting at middleweight for the first time. And both fighters had an eye on middleweight champion Hopkins, who handed Trinidad his only defeat in September 2001.

Trinidad was an 8-5 favorite, but Wright came in determined to give him a boxing lesson, and he did. He landed 262 of 756 punches, including 185 jabs, to 58 of 557 for Trinidad, who was credited with landing only 15 jabs.

"I executed the game plan beautifully," Wright said. "I hit him with some great shots in the face."

The tone of the fight was set in the opening round as Wright used his right jab to keep Trinidad off balance. Wright kept the jab in Trinidad's face all night, frustrating Trinidad and keeping him from getting off his big punches.

Wright had promised to let fans know with a smile at the end of the first round if he had Trinidad figured out, and he grinned as he walked back to the corner. After the end of the second and third rounds, he urged the crowd to cheer him on. *AP*

WINKY Wright lands a right jab to the face of Felix Trinidad. REUTERS

Jackson still undecided on coaching

BEVERLY HILLS, California—Nine-time NBA champion coach Phil Jackson is still trying to decide whether he will return to coaching next season, and expects teams would want to hear from him by next month.

"I've not made up my mind. Coaching is an option," Jackson told The Associated Press in an interview on Saturday, adding that while he had set no deadline for his decision, "by mid-June or by early June, people need to have answers."

The former Los Angeles Lakers coach said he wouldn't necessarily mind taking on a rebuilding job.

"The two teams I've been with have been relatively set. I was in Chicago as an assistant coach when they were rebuilding. The Lakers had to practically rebuild all the time. The changes we went through in the first three championships with the organization were probably more than we went through in Chicago."

Although Jackson had some critical comments about Kobe Bryant in a book he wrote after leaving Los Angeles, he said on Saturday he'd have no difficulty working with the Lakers star. *AP*

Sharapova falls short once more

—Patty Schnyder
more concerned with
n ranking than end-
aria Sharapova's bid
1.

eighth-seeded Swiss
pset Sharapova, 3-6,
; in the semifinals of
n Open on Saturday.

ne it was also about
I can be in the Top
n. For me, that's spe-
id Schnyder, who is
13th but reached No.
9.

r Saturday, defend-
mpion Amelie Mau-
eached her fifth con-
final at Foro Italico
6-2, 6-4 win over
eded Vera Zvonareva.
no will face Schny-
unday's final.

apova could have
en Lindsay Daven-
the top ranking if she
s US$1.3 million clay-
court tuneup for the French
Open, which starts May 23.

"She deserves to be No. 1, she's a great champion," Schnyder said of Sharapova. "I just took a chance on a clay court. I think it's her weakest surface."

SHARAPOVA: Foiled. AFP

Schnyder was coming off a semifinal appearance at the German Open, where she lost to eventual champion Justine Henin-Hardenne. She improved to 12-4 on clay this season.

Sharapova also had a chance to take the top spot in Berlin, but she lost to Henin-Hardenne in the quarterfinals. *AP*

Ozamis forges OT win; Cavite scores

OZAMIZ CITY—Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's Ozamiz Cotta went on a 13-5 tear in overtime to hold off the Iloilo Warriors, 102-97, and assume solo leadership in the southern conference of the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the jampacked Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym here.

After Iloilo's Edu Allado opened the overtime with a trey, Bob Cousy Ilanga quickly answered with a triple to trigger that 13-5 run which propelled Ozamiz to its third straight victory.

The Warriors of IBL president Robert Uy suffered their second consecutive loss in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Philtranco, Sunbolt, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Ping Ping Lechon, Rough Rider Jeans, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Over at the Merville Park gym in Parañaque Far Eastern Insurance-backed Cavite of Bacoor Vice Mayor Edwin Malvar and Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Malikisi came from behind to trim the sputtering Parañaque Jets, 94-88.

The Jets, who used Richard Gomez for the first time, collapsed in the third period after erecting an 11-point lead, 76-65.

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Promo Mechanics

1. This nationwide raffle promo is open to all prepaid/postpaid Globe, Smart and Sun Cellular subscribers from May 15 to August 15, 2005.
2. HERE'S HOW TO JOIN:
2.1 Purchase any variant or size of Shell ADVANCE VSX4 and S4 motorcycle oil.
2.2 Look for the Text to Ride sticker attached to the bottle containing the promo code. (Do not detach the sticker from the bottle to validate your raffle entry/entries.)

SHELL ADVANCE. MORE LIFE FOR BIKES.

2.3 Text in ADVANCE, the promo code together with your full name, full address, gender and age. Only one registered name per SIM is allowed.

***Note: The cost for each successful message sent is Php 2.50 for Globe and Smart subscribers. For Sun Cellular subscribers, cost per text message is Php 2.00.

Example:
ADVANCE <stickercode>/<full name>/<full address>/<gender>/<age>
ADVANCE AB123/Lester Obice/18A L. Zobel St., Makati/M/22

Official courier partner:
WWWExpress

2.4 Wait for the confirmation message
Example:
"You are now registered to Shell ADVANCE Text to Ride promo! You currently have XXX raffle entries. Do not detach the Text to Ride sticker from the bottle to validate your entry. Keep buying ADVANCE VSX4 or S4 to increase ur chances of winning! For ur nxt entries, just txt ADVANCE <sticker code> to 2955. Ex: ADVANCE CD456 P2.50/txt for Globe and Smart subscribers, P2.00/txt for Sun subscribers. Promo period May15-Aug 15. See posters and flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR permit # 1815, s'2005"

2.5 For subsequent raffle entries, simply purchase any variant or size of Shell ADVANCE VSX4 or S4 motorcycle oils and text ADVANCE together with the promo code found in the Text to Ride sticker. No need to register.

Example:
ADVANCE <stickercode>
ADVANCE CD456

"Thank u! You currently have XXX raffle entries. Do not detach the Text to Ride sticker from the bottle to validate your entry. Keep buying ADVANCE VSX4 or S4 to increase ur chances of winning! For ur nxt entries, just txt ADVANCE <sticker code> to 2955. Ex. ADVANCE CD456. P2.50/txt for Globe and Smart subscribers, P2.00/txt for Sun subscribers. Promo period May15-Aug 15. See posters and flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR permit # 1815, s'2005"

For unsuccessful or incomplete registration format, you will receive this reply message from the ADVANCE info service:

"Sorry, the information you sent is INCOMPLETE! Kindly text in this format & send to 2955: ADVANCE <sticker code>/<full name>/<full address>/<gender>/<age> Ex: ADVANCE AB123/Lester Obice/18A L. Zobel St., Makati/M/22. For inquiries, text ADVANCE HELP to 2955. P2.50/txt for Globe and Smart subscribers, P2.00/txt for Sun subscribers. See posters and flyers for details. Promo period: May15-Aug15 Per DTI#1815 s'05."

2.6 A promo code can only be texted/used once to earn entries.
2.7 Equivalent raffle entries per variant:

Variant	No. of Raffle Entries Earned
VSX4	5 Raffle Entries
S4	2 Raffle Entries

3. To check how many raffle entries you have accumulated, Text ADVANCE ENTRIES to 2955 and wait for this confirmation message.
Example:
"You now have XXX raffle entries. Purchase more Shell ADVANCE VSX4 and S4 for greater chances of winning. Accumulate more raffle entries for the Minor and Grand Draws. P2.50/txt for Globe and Smart subscribers, P2.00/txt for Sun subscribers. See posters and flyers for details. Promo period: May15-Aug15 Per DTI#1815 s'05."

4. Several chances of winning exciting prizes in the Minor Draws and Grand Draw.

Minor Draw Prizes	Winners per Draw
Advance Jackets	20 winners/draw
Advance Spl. Team Shirts	20 winners/draw
Advance Embroidered Caps	40 winners/draw
Advance Shirts	60 winners/draw
Grand Draw - Major Prizes	
Yamaha Nouvo	5 winners
Suzuki Shogun Pro	3 winners
Honda XRM	3 winners
Grand Draw - Minor Prize	
Ducati Watches	5 Winners

Minor Draw Dates	Time & Date of SMS Cut-Off	Time of Raffle Draw/Venue
May 30	11:59 PM of May 29	2:00 PM at Shell House
June 15	11:59 PM of June 14	2:00 PM at Shell House
June 30	11:59 PM of June 29	2:00 PM at Shell House
July 15	11:59 PM of July 14	2:00 PM at Shell House
July 29	11:59 PM of July 28	2:00 PM at Shell House
Grand Draw		
August 16	11:59 PM of August 15	3:00 PM at Shell House

***Non-winning entries will still be included in the succeeding draws.

5. A participant can only win once per draw. If a name is drawn more than once he/she gets the prize of the higher value or greater value. Only registered participants can win.
6. Winners will be notified through SMS via 2955 and a winner's notification mail to be sent by WWWExpress. A complete list of winners will also be published in a newspaper of general circulation w/in two (2) weeks after each draw.
7. Prizes at the Minor Prize draws and the minor prizes at the Grand Draw shall be hand carried (Door to Door service) by the WWWExpress team to the winners' registered address. Major prizes at the Grand Draw must be redeemed at the Shell House, Valero St., Makati City or at the nearest Shell Depots/installation nationwide, as identified on the winner's notification mail sent by WWWExpress.
8. Winners must present the following requirements to the WWWExpress (verification) team to claim or redeem their prizes.
   a. Original and Photocopy of any valid ID with picture (e.g. driver's license, passport, company ID) bearing the same name and address that was used in registering for the promo.
   b. Registered SIM card
   c. The bottle with the attached Text to Ride sticker with the winning promo code. Tampered and detached Text to Ride sticker from the bottle shall render the entry invalid. (Failure to comply and present the bottle with the winning promo code shall disqualify the winner from claiming the prize)
   d. Winner's notification mail sent by the WWWExpress team.
9. The winners declared by Shell and its representatives, with the concurrence of the DTI, are final.
10. The Major Prizes at the Grand Draw must be claimed within 60 days after receipt of the winning SMS via 2955 and the winner's notification mail sent by WWWExpress, or else, shall be forfeited in favor of Shell, with prior DTI approval.
11. All prizes are tax-free, not convertible to cash and not transferable. Registration of the motorcycle in the name of the winner shall be shouldered by Shell.
12. All employees of Shell, their Agencies/Third Parties, its Dealors and Employees, Smart Communications Inc., Globe Telecommunications, Inc., Sun Cellular and their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
13. Text in ADVANCE OFF to 2955 to refrain from receiving unsolicited messages on the promo.
14. For further delivery queries please call the WWWExpress Hotline at 879 8888 or text in ADVANCE HELP <your question> to 2955.

See Posters and Flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1815, Series of 2005

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GALLERIA
632-9115/16

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN • THX
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE INTERPRETER
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

5 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
10:45 1:35 4:25 7:15 10:00

6 IN GOOD COMPANY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 SIX
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

8 THE WEDDING DATE
1:05 3:20 5:35 7:50 10:00

9 GUESS WHO?
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 THE PACIFIER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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2 SIX
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
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4 THE WEDDING DATE
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5 XXX 2
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6 IN GOOD COMPANY
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7 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
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METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

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2 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
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3 THE INTERPRETER
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4 GUESS WHO?
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8 SIX
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NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25

2 XXX 2
12:00 1:55 4:05 6:15 8:30

3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25

4 GUESS WHO?
12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25

5 RESERVE

6 RESERVE

7 RESERVE

8 RESERVE

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4 AMITYVILLE HORROR

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GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 IN GOOD COMPANY	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE AMITYVILLE HORROR GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	3 THE INTERPRETER GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE WEDDING DATE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 IN GOOD COMPANY GUARANTEED SEATS		
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Team Iguana solo leader; Blazers quit

By Jasmine W. Payo

SUBIC—It came as no surprise that the much-fancied Team Iguana claimed the solo lead yesterday even as the Honda-Petron Blazers abruptly pulled out on Day 8 of the Island Paradise Adventure Race here in Olongapo City, Zambales.

Celebrity racer Illac Diaz and brothers Marc and JC Leviste contested the 15 demerit points race officials slapped on them Saturday for an infraction committed three days ago and stunned everyone by quitting a day before the final leg.

"Since the start of the race, the decisions of the officials have been inconsistent," said Marc Leviste of the Blazers, a perennial top three contender in the P1-million challenge.

The Honda-Petron Blazers' unexpected exit left Team Iguana and Team Edge, composed of national triathlete Nonoy Jopson, Quinito Moras and Niño Abarquez, in a tight duel for the biggest cash prize in local adventure racing.

Tied at 14 demerit points, Iguana's Nissan Frontier and Edge's Ford Ranger both completed the eight stages with perfect runs.

But Iguana earned a 5-point bonus in one checkpoint—the mango-eating challenge—and took top spot with 9 points.

Brothers Jerome and Jason Luengo and cousin Renante Luengo of Team Tribu moved up to third with 19 points in their Dodge Dakota.

Top formula driver Mike Potenciano and Bryan and JT Gonzales of MP Turbo settled for fourth after scoring 20 points in their Toyota Hilux.

The Blazers reportedly hitched on a scooter on a challenge that required them to go on foot in the Ilocos Norte leg on Day 5 of the 2,000-kilometer Luzon race.

"It was unfair," said Leviste. "They decided on it a day before the finals."

But race director Thumbie Remegio noted that he has been trying to settle the issue the past few days.

"They knew that they were going to have a penalty," said Remegio. "We had to investigate first because other teams filed a complaint about their violation."

The eighth stage kicked off at the Hundred Islands Park in Alaminos, Pangasinan.

PETRON
speedo

GENEVIEVE Lanuevo dives for a save as sister Jennifer looks on during their match against Erika Tiamzon and Rolyn Marquicias. ERNIE SARMIENTO

Newcomers dominate Petron beach volley

ANGELES CITY—First-timers in the beach volley circuit made their mark in the opener yesterday of the 2005 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament's second leg, pulling off masterful victories over the veterans at the Clearwater Country Club here.

Former Far Eastern University standout Monica Aleta and ex-University of Santo Tomas mainstay Joan Carpio, who are both making their first appearance in the Petron series, whipped Jennifer Halos and Henelyn Perez, 21-5.

"We had better sandcourt coverage," said the tall and pretty Aleta, a national team mainstay like her partner Carpio. "We may be newcomers in the Petron tournament but we have been together before in many regular volleyball tournaments."

A second rookie pair made up of Erika Tiamzon of the Ateneo de Davao and Rolyn Marquicias of Dumaguete's Foundation University, plastered veterans Genevieve and Jennifer Lanuevo, 21-6.

Of the tournament's 20-player cast, 11 are first timers, according to organizer Tisha Abundo, a former commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Clearwater CC general manager Richard Halewyck made the ceremonial serve in the tournament, second stop of the Petron series. He was assisted by Petron's Tina Bayot and Errol Collantes, Speedo's Leni Delmendo and Toyota-Pasong Tamo's Edwin Lozano and Geoffrey Alvarado.

The beach volleyball extravaganza is also sponsored by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Pagcor and Toyota Pasong Tamo. Speedo is the tournament's official outfitter while Mikasa is the official ball.

Later in the day, the veteran tandem of Joyce Ann Realeza and Mari Maicah Mariano averted an all-rookie romp by overpowering the rookie pairing of Ingrid Berayo and Rhea Dimayuga, 21-12.

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Goto, Patricio Eagle Ridge club champs

JAPANESE expatriate Fujio Goto turned back Manfred Guangko, 2 and 1, to capture the men's championship of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite, over the weekend.

Goto first took out defending champion Oh Kwang Taek, 6 and 5, in the semifinals before subduing Guangko in the finale that saw the Filipino miss a short game-tying putt that could have won him the 15th hole of the Greg Norman course.

Guangko broke his putter after he slammed it against his foot in disgust.

Nila Patricio dominated Kyung Ae Roh, 5 and 3, to bag the ladies' crown.

Cesar Dulay bagged the seniors title by upsetting Peping Nepomuceno in the semifinal and then beating Oscar Ordinario, 2-up in the final.

Lawrence Celestino scored a 2 and 1 win over Avelino Beltran for the Class B diadem while Bobby Tapawan edged Seo Jong Won to bring home the Class C trophy.

Oh, however, and Arlette Dizon, who lost in the first round of the ladies match play, will still represent Eagle Ridge in the much-awaited National Tournament of Club Champions to be hosted by the country's biggest golf complex on May 24-29.

Eagle Ridge project director Wini Gob also bared they will be opening the driving range in time for the tournament. The range is also the biggest in the country with a double-tee design.

Club champions from 27 clubs all over the country are competing in the NTCC, a tourney co-presented by Inquirer Golf and Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

SPORTSWATCH

75 fights up in RMC 6-cocker

A BIG field of participants is expected in today's second round eliminations of the three-day Air Assault 6-Cock Derby at Roligon Mega Cockpit. Seventy-five fights are on tap in the P1 million derby hosted by the Ampil and Bacud brothers of Negros Occidental which kicks off at 6 p.m. Tata Rey Masbate of Rey Briones and BJ Sniper Hatawan of Boy Jalandoni topped the opening round Saturday night with three wins each. Eight entries recorded two wins apiece, namely, RQ and DC, Great Wall 2.5, JU Listana, Gamefowls, Acas B- day, June 3 and 4 Ormoc 1M, HMS Negros Coliseum and Yul and China. Meanwhile, Roligon's Summer Heat 4-Cock Derby, with P1.2 million and a Toyota Hi-Lux at stake, fires off on May 28, 30 and June 1. Acceding to requests from small-time breeders, host Rolly Ligon pegged the entry fee at only P5,500. Reservation for cockhouses is ongoing. For inquiries, call 833-2275, 833-1638 or 852-9812.

GCAP derby kicks off today

BIG-TIME cockfighting action resumes at Las Piñas Coliseum today as the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 7-Cock Derby gets under way at 7 p.m., featuring more than 50 fights. The finals of the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 is on Wednesday. A jampacked gallery was on hand Saturday to see Pol Estrellado (Golden Circle Orly) and Dicky Lim (RQP San Juan) post identical five wins and one loss in the Big Event Part II 6-Cock Derby. Attention today shifts to the tightly contested GCAP Cocker of the Year race, with at least eight members within striking distance of the title. Among the top contenders are Gerry Ramos, Benjie Lim, Patrick Antonio, Pepito Ngo, William Go, Tony Lasala and Lito Orillaza. The GCAP Cocker of the Year winner will be known on May 23 during the Grand Championship 5-Cock Derby. For inquiries, call 873-1040, 874-3910 or 0926 -7450375.

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IMPORTED STAKES

Stowaway Lass turns down Sound Offer

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

STOWAWAY Lass has improved a lot since Val Dilema took over as her regular pilot.

Getting another brilliant ride from the star jockey, the Aussie import shot through an opening at the top of the stretch then outran Sound Offer to win the second leg of the 2005 Imported Stakes Series yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

"I think we found the right partner for Stowaway Lass and that is Val," said jubilant owner Emmanuel "Dodo" Atienza, praising the older brother of ace jockey Pat. "He really clicks with my horse."

Three triumphs

Rightfully so because since Atienza decided to tap Dilema's services, Stowaway Lass has nailed down four wins, including yesterday's feat that gave the 6-year-old bay mare sired by With Class out of Royal Pirate a string of three straight triumphs that started last April 12.

Another marked improvement for Stowaway Lass is the fact that she's now quicker off the gates, a factor which helped her dispatch tiring opponents when Dilema asked her for the juice at mid-backstretch.

Resounding win

Rallying from fifth spot and using the rail to her advantage, Stowaway Lass passed between Sound Offer and Heroics when they swung for home and kicked away to a resounding four-length victory.

"*Saludo ako sa sakay ko. Matapang lumaban* (I salute my mount. She's a fighter)," said Dilema. "*Abangan n'yo ang mga susunod niyang takbo* (Keep an eye on her)."

Stowaway Lass's win rewarded Atienza, an off-track betting station operator and owner of popular gallopers Crystal City and Front Page, with the top purse of P270,000 courtesy of the sponsoring Philracom.

The Jess Pabilic-conditioned Stowaway Lass, a so-so campaigner in the past either with JT Zarate, JB Bacaycay, AB Alcasid or AF Sullano until Dilema came along, negotiated the 1,500-meter race in 1:33.5 (17.5-24-24.5-27.5).

Sound Offer, handled by Eldy Salvador, lost steam after tracking Heroics early on and settled for the runner-up prize of P101,250.

Taking advantage

Midnight Star arrived third followed by Heroics, Queen Bearheart, Desirable, Suppressed and American Woman.

Heroics took advantage of stall No. 1 and outjumped the field, shaking off other speedballs like Sound Offer and Queen Bearheart, while Stowaway Lass simply watched from striking range.

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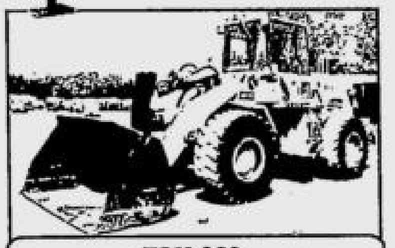
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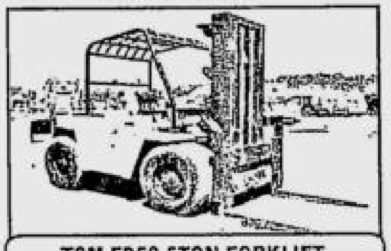
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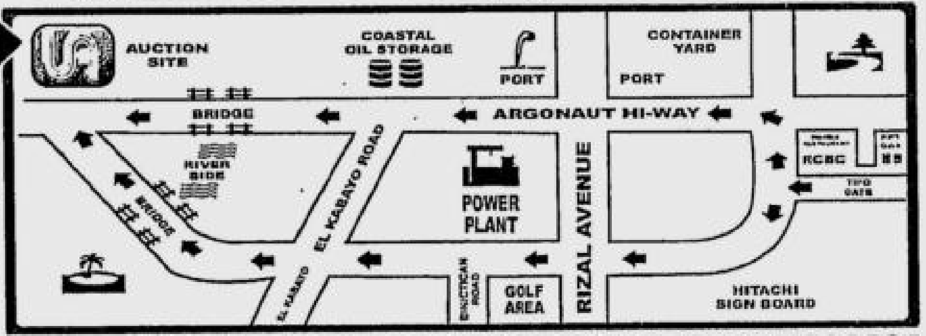

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Panabo pugs tipped to keep national youth boxing crown

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—All eyes will be on the fighters from defending champion Panabo City, Davao del Norte, when hostilities in the 2005 National Youth and Women's Boxing Championships kick off beginning at 3 p.m. today.

The sluggers from Panabo, handled by Rep. Antonio Floirendo, remain the heavy favorites, but a host of others, including Puerto Princesa, are expected to spoil Panabo's repeat bid.

Mayor Edward Hagedorn has vowed his boxers would stamp their mark in the tournament, which was formally opened Sunday afternoon at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum.

The female boxers from Puerto Princesa, including nationals Gretchen Abaniel and Josie Gabuco, stand as the biggest threats to the Panabo bets.

Abaniel and Gabuco's international exposures and rigid training in the national team will come in handy in this weeklong slugfest organized by the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (ABAP) headed by Manny Lopez.

Two-time Olympian Romeo Brin, 31, will coach the Puerto Princesa squad.

Where have the PBA fans gone?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

AS A longtime follower of the Philippine Basketball Association, I can't help but notice the alarming decline in crowd attendance at PBA games. Why is this happening?

I am not saying that Commissioner Noli Eala is to blame but the fact that the usual huge turnout has been missing lately only shows that the PBA, once the country's most profitable and popular play-for-pay league, could be losing its mass appeal.

The only bright spot this season is Eala's expanded commitment to support the national basketball teams in all international tournaments such as the Olympics, World Basketball Championship, the ABC (Asian Basketball Confederation), Southeast Asian Games, the controversy-ridden Seaba (Southeast Asian Basketball Association) tournament and the Jones Cup.

Eala is also the moving spirit behind the first ever PBA Hall of Fame which will honor the league's exemplary players, coaches, media personalities and commissioners led by the venerable Leo Prieto and Eala's immediate predecessor, my *kabayan*, Jun Bernardino.

Still, many don't want to be in the shoes of Noli Eala. They say the PBA is facing not only dwindling attendance, but many other problems such as the lack of quality imports in the ongoing Fiesta Conference, the lack of a permanent venue, the presence of rude imports and arrogant foreign-bred players who are being investigated for presenting dubious documents in claiming they have Filipino roots.

***

BASKETBALL IN LIMBO. There is a lot of confusion in Philippine basketball today. There are two national teams now preparing for the Seaba championship in Singapore next month—one mentored by PBA coach Chot Reyes, who was picked by the basketball committee of Philippine Olympic Committee president Peping Cojuangco and the other handled by coach Boysie Zamar, who was chosen by the Basketball Association of the Philippines headed by Tiny Literal.

POC media officer Joey Romasanta said the POC-BAP controversy needs "honorable men" at this point and not inputs from a lawyer, referring to Boni Alentajan, BAP legal counsel and spokesman, who had accused Cojuangco of intruding into BAP's affairs by forming the national basketball team.

"The POC is not forming the national basketball team," Romasanta told this corner last Friday afternoon. "The POC only entered the picture following the country's string of embarrassing reversals in the Asian region, including the shocking defeat of the national team to the virtually unknown Parañaque Jets in a local tournament held recently." Romasanta added that it was the BAP officials themselves who sought Mr. Cojuangco's help and later signed a resolution expressing the BAP's full cooperation in the formation by the POC (and the Philippine Basketball Association) of the national teams for international and regional tournaments such as the forthcoming Seaba cagefest. Among the signatories were BAP executive vice president Christian Tan, vice president Filomeno Codiñera, secretary general Graham Lim, national coaches commission chair David Zamar and legal counsel Alentajan.

However in a sudden turnaround, the same set of basketball officials, plus a few more, passed another resolution stating that the BAP is sending the national team it had earlier formed to the Seaba meet, totally disregarding its commitment to the POC.

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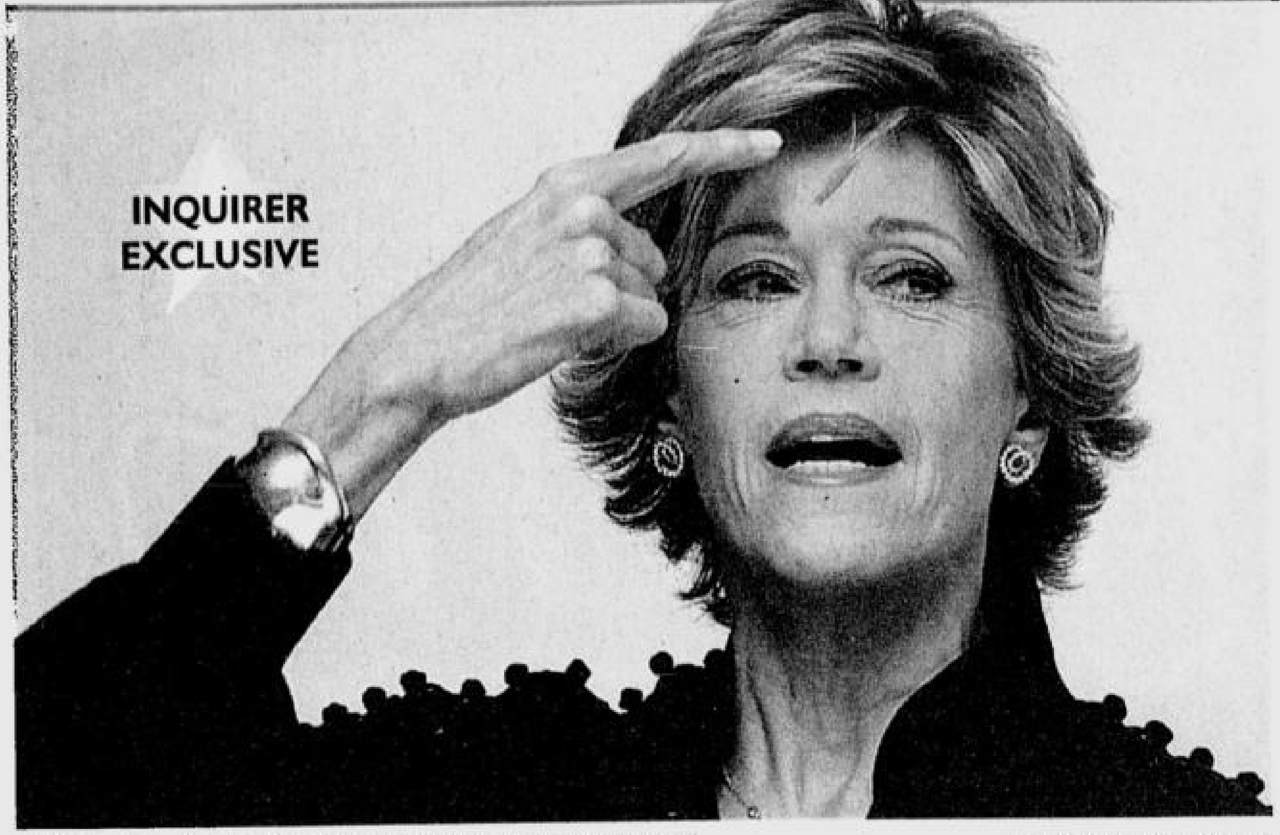

JANE Fonda, enthusiastic interviewee: "God, I'm long-winded!"

PHOTOS BY JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

The prime of Ms Jane Fonda

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Jane Fonda gasps when she turns to a reporter asking her a question and sees a long, wide Band-Aid on his forehead.

"What happened to you?" Fonda asks. When he tells Fonda off "a freak accident playing soccer," the feminist did not presume that he was playing with a male. Earnestly, she inquired, "Was it a woman or a man?"

One other striking impression about Fonda, fitness video queen in the 1980s, is how ramrod straight she is, whether sitting down for this press con or on her feet posing for pictures. At 67, she must have the best posture among all the actresses we have interviewed. An eager, enthusiastic interview subject, the Golden Globe and Oscar winning actress clenchès her fist, raises a finger or both arms or wraps her arms around her slim torso to drive home a point.

We can practically "see" her think—she pauses, briefly stares into the distance and unconsciously flutters her eyelids as if she's calling up some files in her mind. And then she speaks. "God, I'm long-winded!" she declares.

Divorced from Ted Turner in 2001 (her other two marriages were to politician Tom Hayden and to the late French director Roger Vadim), Fonda is back on screen as Jennifer Lopez's "Monster-in-Law."

"I needed money," she explains why she signed on. Actually, she's giving her talent fee to a non-profit organization she set up for pregnant teens in Atlanta.

The daughter of film legend Henry Fonda also just came out with a memoir, "My Life so Far." The book covers a wide range of subjects, including her infamous wartime Hanoi trip, where she was photographed at the controls of a North Vietnamese antiaircraft. She has issued an apology for the photo but not for protesting the war. While some US veterans have accepted Fonda's apology, many vets have not forgiven her.

At a book signing in Kansas City last month, a man spit a load of tobacco in Fonda's face. She reportedly continued signing books after the tobacco juice was wiped off.

The following are excerpts from a recent morning conversation with her.

Did you miss acting during the years you were away?

Not at all. Isn't that amazing? But I love going to the movies. I admired so many performances that I saw in the last 15 years. I never wished that they had been mine. But about a year or so ago, I realized that I'm a very different person than I was 15 years ago. And I was curious to see whether the process of making a movie would bring me some joy—it had not, toward the end of my career. Then this script came along with this outrageous character, which was unlike anything that I'd done before. And I needed money (laughs). Let's just put the cards on the table. I do work in Georgia where I live. I'm 67. I'm not going to be around that much longer. I want to be sure that ... when I die, there'll be enough money to continue funding the work. So half of my salary went to endow the work that I do in the state of Georgia with young and poor families, young boys and girls.

Exactly what do you do?

Ten years ago, I founded the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and the Jane Fonda Center at Emery School of Medicine. We work with poor families, children, and those who work with adolescents, to try to provide young people with hope. Hope is the best contraceptive. If young people can see a future for themselves, they would be more motivated not to engage in risky behavior, like getting pregnant, HIV/AIDS, getting into drugs and things like that. We encourage them to stay in school and do well. We teach [young] parents how to be better parents—we teach 12-, 13-, 14-year-old mothers, young girls who have babies. Of all the industrialized countries, we have the highest rate of teen pregnancy, AIDS, abortions. In Europe and in the Netherlands in particular, kids are just as sexually active, but because contraception and condoms are viewed as health issues, it's out there. It's spoken about. There's no embarrassment. Kids know how to take care of themselves. That's how we should be. But we're not.

AT the premiere of "Monster-In-Law," with co-star Jennifer Lopez

Viola Fields, your character in the movie, is a TV talk show host who has met most of the world leaders. Can you name one or two extraordinary people you've met?

I would say that Nelson Mandela was probably one of the people who touched and moved me the most. And the Dalai Lama. Those two. I hope the only thing that I have in common with Viola is that I'm really interested in people.

Have interviewers been fair to you?

Life isn't fair. I don't like it when celebrities complain about this sort of thing. You make your bed, you lie in it. All told, yeah, pretty good. I wish though that in the United States these days, the media would have more, I was going to say balls, but I'll say ovaries (laughs).

There is a hilarious scene in which Viola does something when this 17-year-old star that she is interviewing is not talking sense.

As someone who was once thought of that way, as a kind of a bubblehead, superficial sex kitten, I have a great empathy for those girls. I think that underneath is a human being desperate to be taken seriously, who needs help to understand what has happened in her life that has made her so cut off from her soul.

Working with Jennifer Lopez, you must have noticed how being a movie star today is different from being one in the sixties.

We didn't have such intense media scrutiny like today. Today, there's very little privacy. And there's much more importance on how you look and how you dress.

Some of your best films were made in the '70s. What are your thoughts on the "corporatization" of the movie studios today?

It would be harder to make a movie like "Coming Home" now. But it would be pretty easy to do some of the others, like "The China Syndrome" and "Nine to Five." "On Golden Pond" wasn't easy to do even then. We couldn't get financing in the United States for "On Golden Pond." We had to go to England. Nobody wanted to finance a movie with two old people and a young kid. Especially because we couldn't get insurance—my dad was so sick.

What do you think of the films coming out of Hollywood today?

Some are fantastic. "The Aviator," "Finding Neverland" and "I Heart Huckabee." There are all kinds of movies that are fabulous that are being made now. And you've got your popcorn films, like "Monster-in-Law" (laughs). But I'm glad I made a film that was just a whole lot of fun. That's the kind of film I wanted to do for my first time back, after 15 years. I don't have time to read anything right now. But nobody has sent me any scripts, to be perfectly honest. That's okay. Nobody's asked me for a date either (laughs).

You're not being asked out?

I haven't been thinking about it, to tell you the truth. I went to a psychic who said I was going to meet a man who was my soul mate this year. But I'm not looking.

What have you learned from your marriages?

Never leave yourself behind because you think that if you really brought your whole self into the relationship, then you would be loved. What that means is, that you're willing to give up your relationship with yourself in order to be in a relationship with a man. It doesn't work. And you end up very angry. It has nothing to do with the men. The men, my husbands, are the most wonderful. It was me. I think that I have finally learned. The only reason maybe why I'd like to try it again, is because I want to really see if what I think I've learned works. You can't really know until you're there. I feel that I'm capable now of having a full intimate relationship. But I'll never know because all I have now are dogs and grandkids.

Why do you go to a psychic?

I need all the help that I can get (laughs). I'll take it from wherever I can get it—God, a psychic, a therapist, ex-

THE PRIME/ A2-4

Pinoy showcase at Cannes

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ON MAY 20, four Filipino feature films and two shorts will be showcased at the Cannes International Film Festival's new Toutes les Cinemas du Monde, a new module dedicated to movies that illustrate chosen filmmaking countries' "cinematographic spirit and cultural identity."

Selected by programmers in Cannes, the Filipino films to be screened are "Panaghoy sa Suba" directed by **Cesar Montano** (CM Films); "Dekada '70" by **Chito Roño** (Star Cinema); "Bagong Buwan" by **Marilou Diaz-Abaya** (Star Cinema); and shorts "Liyab" by **Sockie Fernandez** and "Batang Trapo" by **Mes de Guzman.**

Last Wednesday, a press conference was held by **Laurice Guillen-Feleo** of the Film Development Council of the Philippines at the Vera-Perez Gardens, where she and **Marichu VP Maceda,** head of the Council's International Film Festival committee, briefed members of media on the projected Philippine showcase at Cannes, and its significance to our movie industry.

We were informed that the Philippine delegation would be headed by **Marilou Diaz-Abaya.** Aside from the films' directors, delegation members include **Claudine Barretto** and **Piolo Pascual** ("Milan"), **Carlos de Leon** (FDCP-IFF-COM), lawyer **Esperidion Laxa** (Film Academy of the Philippines), **Malou Santos** (Star Cinema), **Ismael A. Reyes** (CM Films), **Marjorie Barretto,** and **Helen Ratier** (Axantis Productions).

The film industry leaders at the press conference thanked the French Embassy for its valuable assistance in making the Philippine showcase at Cannes a reality.

It was pointed out that only seven countries were invited to participate in the new module this year—the Philippines, Morocco, South Africa, Mexico, Austria, Peru and Sri Lanka—making the Philippines' involvement even more distinctive.

Guillen-Feleo hoped that, with the selection of these "very diverse" Filipino movies, "the international film community at Cannes will see a different face of Philippine cinema." She went on to thank the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Tourism and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts for their help in actualizing the Philippines' special participation in the Cannes filmfest this year.

We asked the members of the panel what it was about the Cannes film festival that made exposure to it so choice. Carlos de Leon started off with the observation that it was the second biggest festival in the world after the Oscars, and its selection process was so rigorous that getting invited was already sufficient reason to celebrate.

Marilou Diaz-Abaya added, "An invitation to Cannes is a guarantee of international attention for a country's films. And, if they like what you show them, a demand can be created that could benefit other Filipino movies as well...

"I believe that the stunning diversity of the movies we're showing this year will make a decided impact that will help give other Filipino productions much-needed international attention."

Laxa interjected that the Philippine showcase at the prestigious Cannes filmfest would expose our movies to film buyers from all over.

For his part, producer-director-actor Cesar Montano said he was looking forward to going to Cannes not just to screen his film, but also to watch the best movies from all over the world, and to interact with filmmakers from other countries. He felt that the "cross-pollination" this would engender could benefit everyone involved.

Mes de Guzman noted that Cannes "defined" world cinema, and he was determined to watch as many movies as he could while he was there, even if it meant going without sleep for days on end!

And producer **Robbie Tan** said a successful screening at Cannes this year could help Filipino producers adjust their focus, from thinking exclusively of the domestic market, to broadening their outlook to include both regional and global markets.

We join these upbeat film people in wishing the best for our country's participation at Cannes on May 20, and trust that its fruits will benefit the entire movie industry and, eventually, the Filipino film audience, as well.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
COSMETIC SURGERY

When we talk about cosmetic surgery, things that come first in our minds are stars and celebrities that have undergone facelift, nose lift, breast enlargement, or liposuction. Oftentimes, the idea about it brings society condemnation, disapproval, and endless criticism. Contrary to these perceptions, cosmetic surgery was given birth not solely for glamorous and aesthetic purposes. Science found the light in cosmetic or plastic surgery to bring about hope to birth disfigurement and war caused deformities. Its noble purpose is to give hope for the unfortunate newborns to live normally and a new life for soldiers and war victims to restore their shattered faces and confidence.

Now, the concept on cosmetic surgery has been diversified. It is now being attributed to many things. Technology, social acceptance, awareness to various media outlets, and people of our new generation giving so much focus on health and fitness, led to the progression of wanting to look good and feel good at the same time. People have deemed cosmetic surgery is the answer to that.

What is Cosmetic Surgery?

Cosmetic Surgery is a subspecialty of medicine that focuses on the enhancement of appearance through surgical and medical techniques. It is specifically concerned with the maintaining of normal appearance, restoring it, or enhancing it beyond the average level toward some aesthetic ideal.

Things to CONSIDER before undergoing a surgery

Determine your purpose. Ask yourself why you want to have a plastic surgery. More than the aesthetic and even financial aspect of the treatment, do you think you are physically and emotionally prepared to accept a new you? Contemplate more and consider a lot of factors before surrendering yourself to the operating room.

Set realistic goals and expectation. Cosmetic surgery is not some sort of magical ritual or procedure. It is not some sort of spell that will fit the saying 'your wish is your surgeon's command'. Cosmetic surgery may be considered a spectacular medical aesthetic treatment but it also has its boundaries and limitations. Art and beauty as it may seem, still science coiled to it does not promise a perfect you. As defined earlier, cosmetic surgery is more confined on enhancement or restoration rather than change or transformation.

On finding the right surgeon. The criteria on finding the right if not, the best surgeon should be high and tough. ***We must be very careful in this particular category for in your decision lies the destiny of your face or your body.*** It is not only a matter of beauty and madness, but sometimes even of life and death. ***Special skill and knowledge are essential in the practice of plastic surgery. Basic requirement is that your surgeon should be a certified and licensed physician.*** Competency in the following fields like anatomy, physiology, pathology, and basic sciences are also plus factors. Your surgeon should also have subspecialty and knowledge in all contributing disciplines like facial plastic surgery, general surgery, and dermatology. In fact, international medical institutions are now giving emphasis on formally introducing a new branch of skin science called "dermatological cosmetic surgery". All in all, competency in cosmetic surgery implies a combination of knowledge, surgical judgment, technical expertise, and ethics in order to achieve the goal of providing aesthetic improvement.

While cosmetic surgery is an immensely positive experience for many people, we should know that there are advantages and disadvantages that may lie ahead. With the growing acceptance and openness to cosmetic surgery, it is also essential that we identify our purpose and not lose sight on the history of how it should be used.

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About dermclinic

Dr. Vinson B. Pineda, a well - respected and internationally recognized dermatologist established Dermclinic more than 30 years ago and is now considered as an institution which has mastered the art and science of skin health and wellness. In fact Dermclinic, has been the learning ground of some notable dermatologists in town today.

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REVIEW

George Lucas' show of Force

THE DIRECTOR frames a scene while actor Samuel L. Jackson, who plays Jedi Mace Wi ndu, looks on.

Wholeheartedly embracing its interstellar history, 'Episode III: Revenge of the Sith' soars, a prequel truly worthy of the Star Wars legacy

By Ruel S. De Vera

SHADOWS and echoes play warily but resolutely at the edges of "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith." Like the titular antagonists out to take control of the universe through mysterious and unseen ways, these shadows have been imbedded by visionary director George Lucas into the midichlorians of his finale to the Star Wars prequels.

These are the shadows of evolution and forbearance. Just as troubled Jedi Knight Anakin Skywalker's (Hayden Christensen) cybernetic hand and ebony wardrobe echoes the eventual mechanical limb and garb of his son Luke, just as the Jedi Starfighter's silhouette already carries the deadly lines of the Imperial TIE Fighter, so too does "Sith" embrace with strength and purpose the legacy of 1977's "Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope" and its two spacefaring sequels.

Above expectations

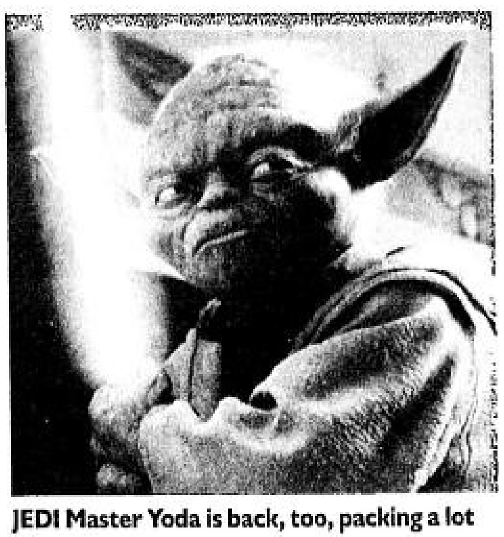
Considering how much of the story is already known, it must have been close to impossible for Lucas to surprise the audience, but the sheer scale of Sith and the extent to which Lucas wields the digital technology—perhaps his true Force—lifts "Sith" above expectations.

"Sith" does not pick up immediately after "Episode II: Attack of the Clones." Instead, it continues right after the ending of Genndy Tartakovsky's ("Dexter's Laboratory") elegant "Star Wars: Clone Wars" animated series (the two volumes of the Cartoon Network series are helpful viewing). The Clone Wars rage on as the determined Separatists and the beleaguered Republic forces remain locked in vicious battle. The Separatist leader General Grievous, a frightening CGI creation that looks like an arachnid crowned with a skull, has abducted Supreme Chancellor Palpatine (Ian McDiarmid). Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi (a confident Ewan McGregor) and apprentice Anakin are sent to rescue him. Meanwhile, the Sith Lord Darth Sidious continues his machinations behind the scenes, plotting to bring down the Jedi. Jedi Masters Mace Windu (cool Samuel L. Jackson) and Yoda (Frank Oz) try to stop him. Amid all this strife, Naboo Senator Padme Amidala (Natalie Portman) discovers she is pregnant with Anakin's child, their forbidden marriage now at risk of discovery even as Anakin struggles to choose which side of the Force he is really on.

Not his strong point

Dialogue has never been Lucas's forte and, if anything, his capacity for it has not improved over time. Portman is particularly hamstrung by "Sith's" predominantly expository, excessively literal and sometimes unintentionally funny dialogue. Fortunately, McDiarmid gives the prequel trilogy its best acting performance by charging Chancellor Palpatine with a majestically cunning energy. Perhaps the real stars of the series are the machines. The effects are ubiquitous and impressive. Starfighters dogfight like crazy. Acrobatic lightsaber duels have been injected with more adrenaline and degree of difficulty. Everyone's favorite droid R2-D2 flies and fights. Lucas has waited for the technology to mature enough to match his imagination and he lets loose in "Sith" even as we count the variety of ways Lucas can use the wipe as a transitional device.

After a rousing opening battle sequence above Coruscant, the film strains to tie up all the disparate plotlines as well as the weight of the franchise it bears. But "Sith" gets better as it marches on; the Republic's fall and the Empire's rise juxtaposed with the fate of Anakin and Padme. "Episode I: The Phantom Menace" was competent and "Episode II" better, but "Sith" is the installment that truly lives up to the formidable quotient of the original Star Wars trilogy, partly on its own inventions and partly due to its wholehearted celebration of returned trilogy favorites such as Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew). Finally reveling in its interstellar history, "Sith" soars to the end. The spaceborne cities have never glittered so brightly. John Williams's unmistakable score has never risen so high.



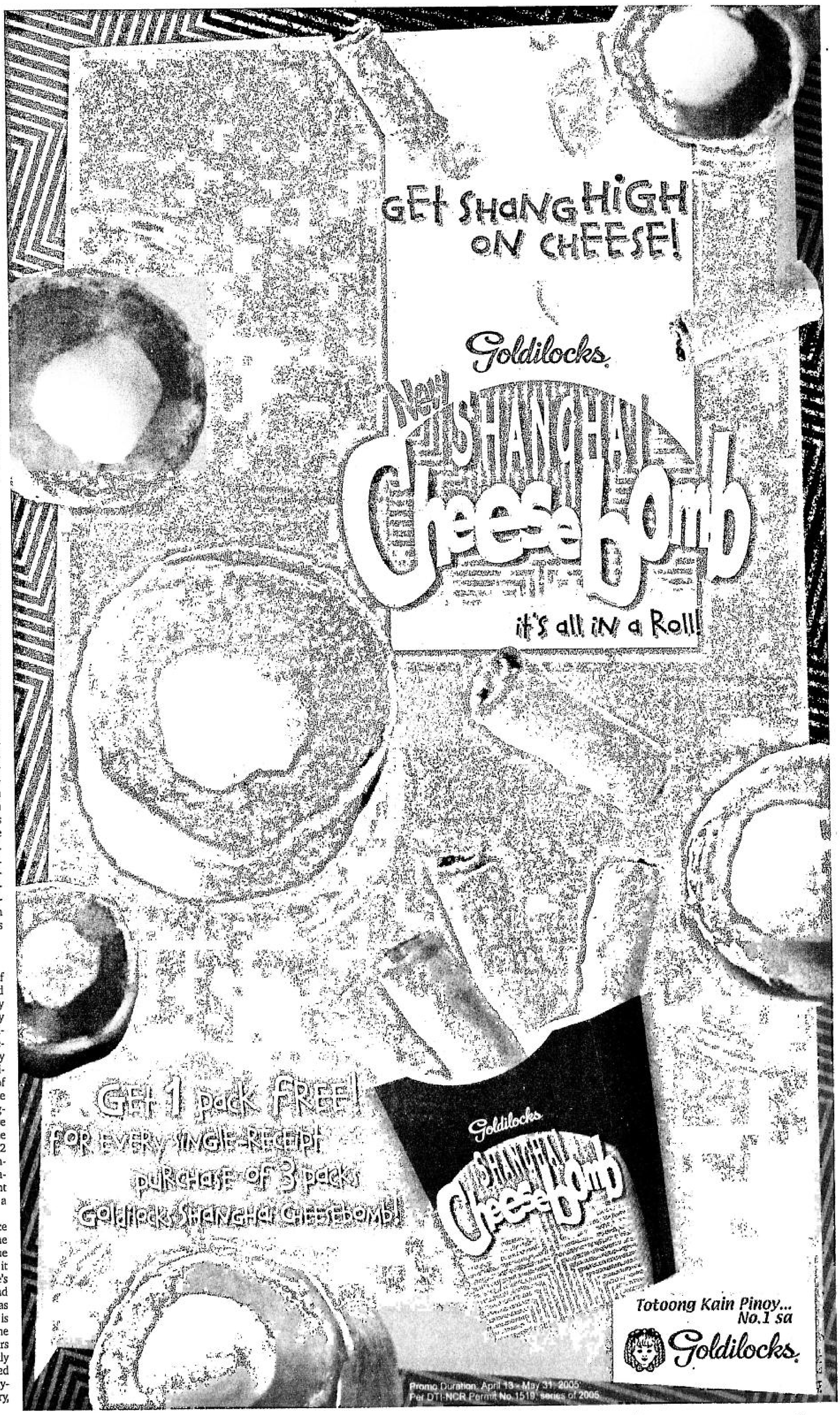
JEDI Master Yoda is back, too, packing a lot of punch.

With its dark, epic tone, "Sith" comes close to the best of the whole series, the still superior "Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back." But what "Sith" echoes, in name as well as purpose, is the solid series-ending "Episode VI: Return of the Jedi." So when Anakin Skywalker rises as Darth Vader for the very first time, deep breaths booming, baritone echoing, it is clear we are witnessing one of modern cinema's new iconic moments.

Powerful themes

"Sith" is imbued with the powerful themes of duality (and thus deception), trust (and thus betrayal) and of course, love (and hatred). Just as the Sith mirror the Jedi, so too does the Emperor reflect darkly Yoda, with Vader the fulcrum. If ever there was a blaster-proof big budget movie, this was it, and there is a palpable sense of sentimentality as audiences realize they may have just heard a starfighter's engine scream and a lightsaber hum for the last time. Ultimately, "Sith" is about endings and beginnings, about death and birth. As this prequel trilogy comes to its end, "Sith" vibrates with the confidence of knowing it has a masterful continuation, albeit one made almost 30 years ago. In that, "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith" is exactly what we've been waiting for—a graceful ending leading to a fresh beginning, invoking mesmerizing shadows unveiling a bright new hope shining in the distance.

20th Century Fox's "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith" opens on May 19.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The prime of Ms Jane Fonda

From page A2-1

husband—whatever. I don't know. I was just curious.

You haven't ruled out marriage in the future.

Honey, at my age you stop ruling things out. I ruled movies out (laughs).

Does your brother (actor Peter Fonda) like your book?

He thinks it's very moving.

How does your daughter feel about you writing on threesomes with her father (Vadim)?

I would not have written that if I had not talked to her about it. For a long time, my children and I have talked about things that I have done in my life that I'm not proud of. And we talked about why. My children and my stepchildren—Ted's children—they all read the book, or the parts of the book that concern them and their fathers. I wrote the things I wrote for a reason. I'm trying to show how far a woman can go in the betrayal of herself, voluntarily, when she feels she's not good enough. I hope that my French family, (Roger) Vadim's family, will understand that. I love them and I feel close to them. I made a big point in all the interviews that Vadim never exploited me. Vadim never forced me to do anything. It was me.

It must have been painful to go through your memories, especially of some in your childhood.

Once I decided to do it, it just flowed. It was an amazing experience, especially with regard to my mother. My mother killed herself when I was 12. She was manic-depressive. I didn't know her very well [but] I dedicated the book to her. I thought, well, in order to really heal, I have to figure out who she was. But from whom? Everyone who knew her is dead.

Then suddenly, people who knew her began to appear in my life, like miracles. I was able to obtain, through lawyers, her medical records. And you know it's what many children dream of—to learn about who your parents were. My mother had typed her life story with her own hand, from her point of view. She was sexually abused. As a child, I knew that on some level. I just knew that something terrible had happened to her.

What aspects of your life do you appreciate better now?

Nobody prepared me for the intense joy of being a grandparent. It's like having a new life, at least for someone like me who wasn't very well parented. I myself was not a good parent to my first child, especially. because I hadn't given birth to myself yet. To have grandchildren is like having a second chance. I have an almost six-year-old grandson and a two-year-old granddaughter. If my grandson is the only man I have in my life from now on, I'll be very happy.

If you were a man, what would you do for the world?

It's too bad that we have to ask, if you were a man what would you do for the world. If I were a full human being, which I hope I'm becoming, I would do every possible thing to have peace instead of war. Nobody is number one forever—Not individuals, and not nations. It's best to make friends ... to be sure that when you're on the decline, there's a nice friendly ground to land on. For bullies, nations that are arrogant, people who are arrogant, the crash is really painful. I love this country and I'm worried about it.

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2	CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY)	ONG BAK
4 (DTS)	THE PACIFIER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1	CAN THIS BE LOVE
2	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 (DOLBY)	SAHARA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	KID
2	TAGOS SA LAMAN
3	KIROT SA DIBDIB
4 (DTS)	ALONE IN THE DARK

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	CURSED
2	CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DTS)	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4	TAGOS SA LAMAN
5	WEDDING DATE

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	CAN THIS BE LOVE
2	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 (DTS)	BOOGEYMAN
4 (DOLBY)	ONG BAK

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	CAN THIS BE LOVE
2	THE PACIFIER
3	THE JACKET
4	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	TAGOS SA LAMAN
2	HOSTAGE

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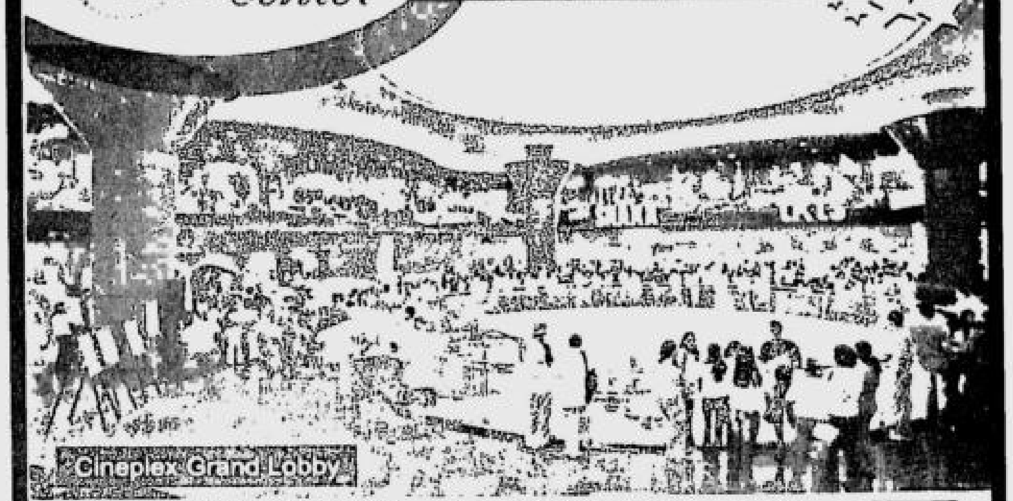
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AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:25 / 2:35 / 4:45 / 6:55 / 9:05
IN GOOD COMPANY
12:45 / 3:30 / 6:15 / 9:00
XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
1:45 / 4:15 / 6:45 / 9:15
THE WEDDING DATE
1:40 / 4:10 / 6:40 / 9:10
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40
THE INTERPRETER
12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
CAN THIS BE LOVE
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
GUESS WHO
1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
Pre-Opening Screenings P 249 / P299
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00
❷ CAN THIS BE LOVE
1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00
❸ XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
12:50 / 2:45 / 4:40 / 6:35 / 8:30
❹ IN GOOD COMPANY
12:00 / 2:45 / 5:30 / 8:15
❺ HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
12:10 / 3:00 / 5:50 / 8.40
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE *May 18*
4:45pm Talk N Text vs. San Miguel / 7:35pm Alaska vs. Sta Lucia
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE *May 22*
4:15pm Fedex vs Coca Cola / 6:35pm Purefoods vs Sta Lucia
CARTER FASHION SHOW *May 21, Sat., 8pm*
Paolo Bediones / Maureen Larrazabal
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26, Thursday 8pm

CENTER EVENTS

FOOD GALLERY & FOOD PLAZA	*Enjoy a special halo halo for only P25 with every P75 food purchase at Ali Mall Food Gallery and Farmers Plaza Food Plaza until May 31.*
TACO BELL	*Get a FREE Tropicana Twister with every purchase of a Meximelt and 16 oz. Pepsi at Taco Bell on the Ground Floor of Gateway Mall until June 6.*
FOOD EXPRESS	*For a minimum purchase of P150 at participating outlets, get two (2) FREE games at Time Zone on Level 3 of Gateway Mall until July 26.*

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

Miss Philippines-Earth not just about beauty

LEGS, legs, legs. And there are 17 more pairs in this year's tilt. Organizers say the pageant promotes preservation of the environment. PHOTOS BY ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

By Armin Adina

SAVE for a minor mishap, the presentation on Tuesday of the 24 official Miss Philippines-Earth 2005 candidates at the Carousel Gardens in Mandaluyong City went smoothly.

University of Santo Tomas coed Olivia Amor Cortes, 20, tripped and fell on her knees. But she quickly regained composure.

Cortes, 5'5" and a Tourism student, told INQUIRER Entertainment later: "When I fell, all I could think of was that I should get up, *mag*-project and smile."

She was rewarded with applause.

In two-piece swimsuits by Accel, Olivia and 23 other girls—including 12 representatives of regions outside Metro Manila—introduced themselves and paraded in front of the media. The event kicked off the contest, which culminates in coronation rites on May 29 at the UP Theater in Diliman, Quezon City.

For a cause

Taglined "Beauties for a Cause," the Miss Philippines-Earth tilt is the only local pageant that promotes environmental preservation. The winner will represent the country in the annual Miss Earth pageant.

All four previous RP representatives landed in the semis—Carlene Aguilar (now Bb. Pilipinas-World) in 2001, April Ross Perez in 2002, Laura Marie Dunlap in 2003 and Tamera Marie Szijarto last year.

This year's batch is a bevy of fresh beauties. Only 20-year-old Heidi Borja from Bulacan is experienced in a national pageant. She was a Bb. Pilipinas 2004 candidate.

Two of the girls were supposed to join Mutya ng Pilipinas earlier.

Theresa Lavinia Fontanilla, representing the National Capital Region, was set to do so last year. "I withdrew because it conflicted with my studies," said Theresa. She now has a Tourism degree from the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas.

Show biz

Evangeline Taguba is the reigning Mutya ng La Union, but she was not informed soon enough that she was to join Mutya ng Pilipinas this year. "When they (Mutya) called me, I had already committed to Miss Philippines," she said.

Western Mindanao's Bernadette Estrada, a Tetchie Agbayani look-alike, is actor John Estrada's aunt. She is 20 years old, and a Business Management major at the Ateneo de Zamboanga University.

Already appearing in television's "Quizon Avenue" is Istana Eula Burgos, a Geology student at UP Diliman who said she believes in the pageant's cause.

She has not told any of her friends that she joined the pageant. "They will be very surprised," she said, "because I'm boyish and a bit chubby."

The tallest candidate, Gennebelle Raagas of Central Luzon, 5'10", is also one of the youngest at 18. She had only two weeks to train after her coronation in Pampanga, but Gennebelle is already one of the strongest competitors.

She walked with much ease and spoke with confidence.

Eurasian beauty

Another 18-year-old, Miss Teen Philippines semifinalist Nadia Lee Cien de la Cruz wowed the crowd with her Eurasian features. The 5'8" stunner has a mixture of Spanish, Russian and Jordanian blood.

Caraga's representative, Feddilaine Apole, impressed the crowd when she greeted them in her native Surigaonon. "*Maradjao karadjao na buntag sa ijo hurot,*" she said. "Good morning to all of you."

It was, in fact, a good morning, although Ilocos Region's Medard German greeted the audience, "Good evening." But she didn't mind the slip; instead, she proceeded to sashay like a pro.

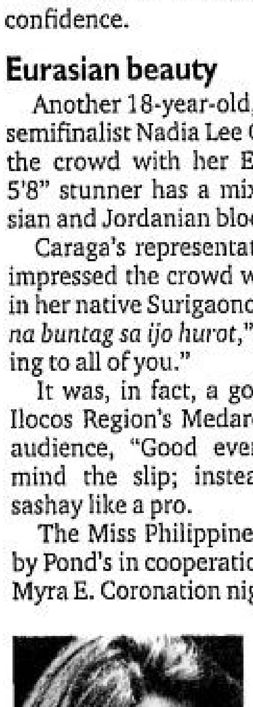
The Miss Philippines pageant is presented by Pond's in cooperation with Avon Color and Myra E. Coronation night airs on ABS-CBN 2.

Miss Philippines-Earth
Eastern Visayas

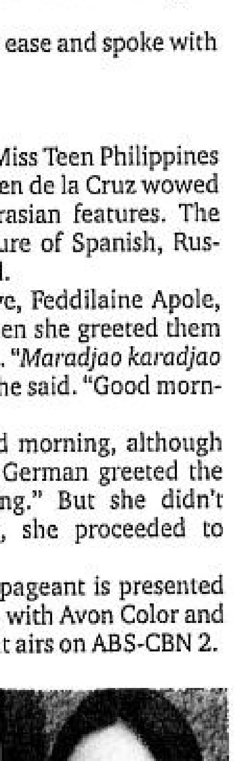
RHODESSA Delante, Eastern Visayas

Miss Philippines-Earth 2005
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
25

ISTANA Eula Burgos, NCR



PAULINE Garrison



OLIVIA Amor Cortes

STAR WARS
EPISODE III

OPENS MAY 19

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Alabang Town Center • Ayala Center Cebu • Market! Market!
For online reservations log on to www.sureseats.com
MTRCB Rating: General Audience (G)
Advance Screenings on May 18 starting 10 PM
AYALA CINEMAS

SCHEDULES OF STAR WARS EPISODE 3 ON MAY 19 (THURSDAY)

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Cinema 1 - 10:40 am, 1:30 pm, 4:20, 10:00
Cinema 2 - 11:10 am, 2:00 pm, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30
Cinema 3 - 11:40 am, 2:30 pm, 5:20, 8:10, 11:00
Cinema 4 - 1:00 pm, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30
Cinema 5 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

GLORIETTA 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30
Cinema 2 - 1:00 pm, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
Cinema 3 - 10:30 am, 1:30 pm, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

GLORIETTA 4
Cinema 1 - 12 40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10
Cinema 2 - 11:45 am, 2:35 pm, 5:25, 8:15, 11:05
Cinema 3 - 12:10 pm, 3:00, 11:30
Cinema 6 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 7 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40

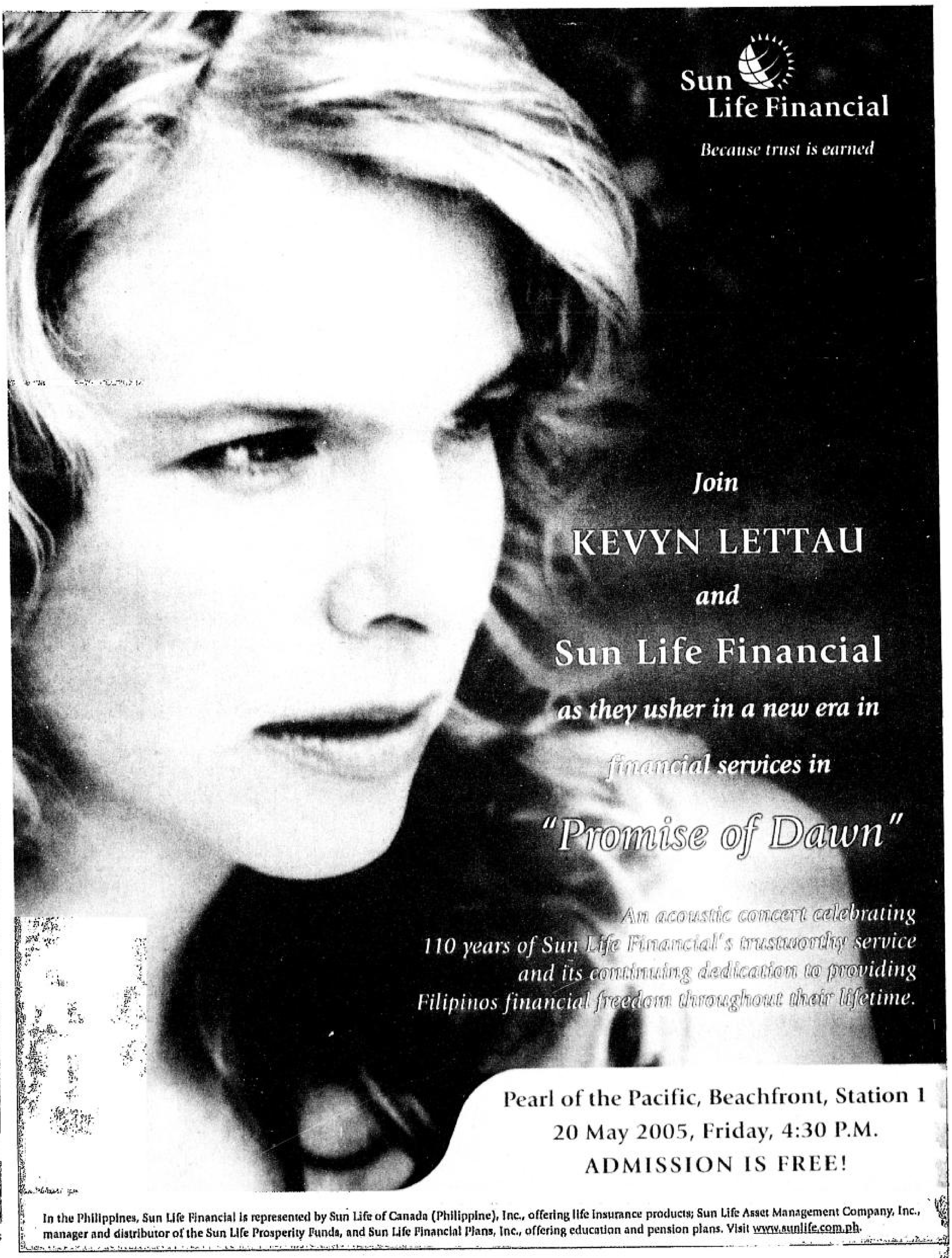
GREENBELT 1
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:20, 6:10, 8:15
Cinema 2 - 1:15 pm, 4:05, 6:55, 9:00

GREENBELT 3
Cinema 1 - 1:40 pm, 4:30, 10:10
Cinema 2 - 2:10 pm, 5:00, 10:40
Cinema 3 - 1:10 pm, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40, 12:30
Cinema 4 - 12:40 pm, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10, 12:00
Cinema 5 - 12:15 pm, 3:05, 5:55, 11:35

MARKET! MARKET!
Cinema 5 - 12 20 pm, 3:10, 6:00, 8:50
Cinema 6 - 12.50 pm, 3:40, 6:30, 9:20
Cinema 7 - 1:20 pm, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Cinema 1 - 12:30 pm, 3:10
Cinema 2 - 1:30 pm, 3:50, 9:30

SCREENING SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



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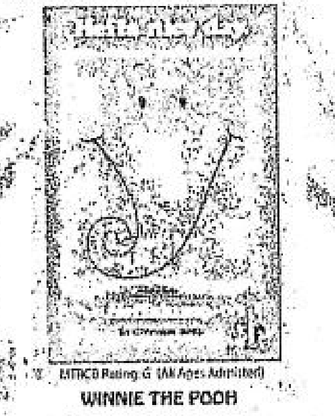

MTRCB Rating: G (All Ages Admitted)
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AND THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD GANG
ARE TOGETHER AGAIN IN...
POOH'S HEFFALUMP MOVIE!
Catch this Charming New Adventure
from may 11 to 17 exclusively at
SM City Sta. Mesa

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the podium cinema
1. IN GOOD COMPANY
1:20 LFS / 1:50 MF / 4:05 / 6:20 / 8:35
10:25 LFS / 10:50 LMF / 10:40 END
2. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
1:25 LFS / 1:55 MF / 4:55 / 7:55
10:30 LFS / 10:50 LMF / 1:15 END
833-8976

sm megamall cinema 1
THE INTERPRETER
12:30 FS / 1:10 MF / 4:00 / 6:30
9:00 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 11:30 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: THE INTERPRETER
11:20 FS / 11:30 MF / 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00
9:07 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:40 END
CINEMA 3: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:20 FS / 11:30 MF / 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00
9:25 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:55 END
(032) 231-3876

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 ANG LAGUSAN
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11 RESERVED
12 IN GOOD COMPANY

sm city fairview
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 SAMARA: RING 2
3 SAHARA
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
8 THE PACIFIER
9 SIX
10 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11 THE WEDDING DATE
12 GUESS WHO

sm city north edsa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 RESERVED
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
5 ARE WE THERE YET?
6 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city sta. mesa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 MISS CONGENIALITY 2
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
9 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
10 IN GOOG COMPANY

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
5 GUESS WHO
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 CAN THIS BE LOVE
9 SIX
10 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila
1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 SIX
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 GUESS WHO
8 THE INTERPRETER
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 SAHARA
11 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12 SAMARA: RING 2

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

sm city biçutan
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 GUESS WHO
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5 SAHARA
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

sm city baguio
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAHARA

sm city batangas
1 THE PACIFIER
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA

sm city marilao
1 SAHARA
2 GUESS WHO
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

sm city bacoor
1 SAMARA: RING 2
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 SIX
8 SAHARA

sm city dasmariñas
1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA

sm city lucena
1 SAHARA
2 THE PACIFIER
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 RESERVED
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 GUESS WHO
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 CURSED
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR

sm city iloilo
1 THE PACIFIER
2 RESERVED
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 SAHARA
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 GUESS WHO
7 RESERVED
8 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city davao
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 GUESS WHO
5 THE INTERPRETER
6 FINDING NEVERLAND

sm city cagayan de oro
1 SAHARA
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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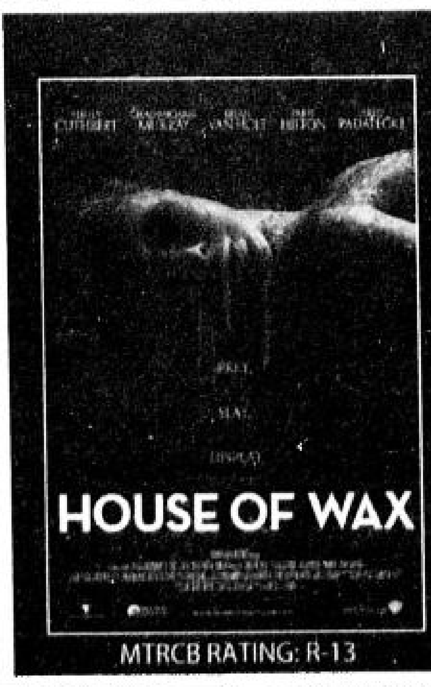

HOUSE OF WAX
MTRCB RATING: R-13
Warner Bros. Pictures and SM Cinema
invite you to the
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HOUSE OF WAX™
MAY 17-18, 2005
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Southmall and The Podium
Regular showing
on May 25, 2005

3 hours of live 'Survivor' today

STUDIO 23 hosts three hours of "Survivor: Palau" in its season finale today—live via satellite, 1 to 4:15 p.m.

This covers the two-hour season finale and the reunion show.

Prime time airing is on May 21, 7 to 8:40 p.m. (finale only). The one-hour reunion airs 7 p.m. on May 28.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
MTRCB: PG-13
12:55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10
2 THE INTERPRETER
MTRCB: PG-13
11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
MTRCB: R-13
11:55, 2:15, 4:35, 6:55, 9:15
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
MTRCB: PG-13
11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10
PREMIERE THEATRE GUESS WHO
MTRCB: PG-13 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Get Your Star Wars Movie Tickets Now!
Be one of the first to catch the simultaneous U.S. screening of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith at the Shang Cineplex on May 18! Premiere screening starts at 10:00pm.
Advance tickets* for sale at no extra service fee from May 6, 2005 onwards. Available at the Shang Cineplex ticket counters at Level 6 and the ticket booth at Level 1.
* Selected screenings from May 18-22
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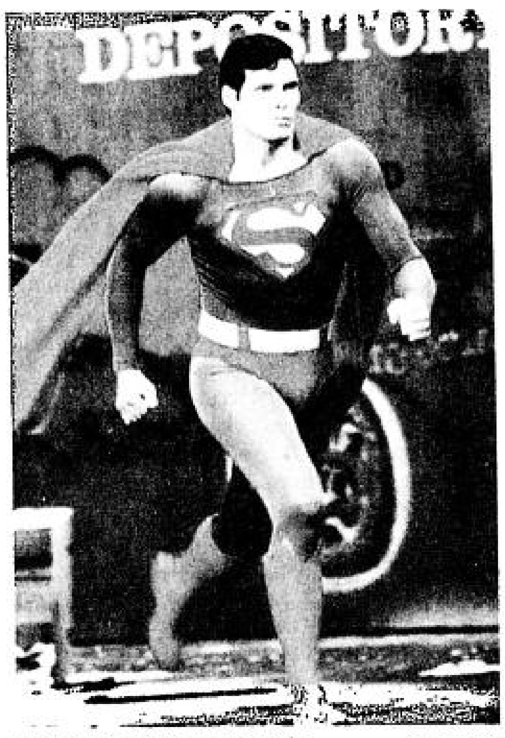
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 IN GOOD COMPANY
11:00, 2:00, 5:00
8:00, 11:00
PG-13
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:50, 1:35, 4:20
7:05, 11:00
PG-13
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
12:55, 3:20, 5:45
8:10, 10:35
R-13
4 GUESS WHO?
12:35, 3:10, 5:45
8:20, 10:50
PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
GUESS WHO PG13 12:00,2:20,4:40,7:00,9:20
IN GOOD COMPANY PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10
AMITYVILLE HORROR R13 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:05
THE INTERPRETER PG13 11:45,2:15,4:45,7:15,9:45
HEAD IN THE CLOUDS R13 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45,10:15
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 1:20,4:20,7:20,10:20

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
starmall EDSA-SHAW
Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Tagos sa Laman
4 Kingdom of Heaven
5 XXX 2
Kids Fun Day Live!
Starmall Edsa May 15 Sun
4pm Activity Area (2nd level)
METROPOLIS ALABANG star
Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Amityville
2 Tagos sa Laman
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 Kingdom of Heaven
6 XXX 2
starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. No. 873.50.04
1 Alone in the Dark
2 Rental Reservation
ABS CBN Goin Bulilit Live!
Metropolis Alabang May 15 Sun.
2pm at the Trade Hall (4th level)

BRANDON Routh in the scarlet cape



CHRISTOPHER Reeve's take AFFILIATESART

Spot the changes ...in 'Superman'

INSTEAD of reinventing the hero's appearance in "Superman Returns," director Bryan Singer said he wanted to be as faithful as possible to the previous incarnations—from the Max Fleischer cartoons of the 1940s to the black-and-white George Reeves TV show to the Christopher Reeve movies of the 1970s and '80s (top).

Singer decided to keep the cape, the blue body suit and red tights, even the V-cut opening of Superman's boots. There are only a few subtle changes:

*The S insignia is slightly smaller and higher on the hero's chest and, instead of being painted on, it's more of a three-dimensional plate.

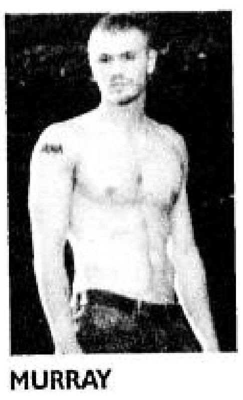
*The S insignia is added to the belt buckle.

*The blue, red and yellow motif has been preserved but the shades are slightly darker than the bright primary colors of the comics. Superman's yellow belt is more golden, and his cape is a deep scarlet.

The key to filling out the costume, however, depends entirely on the physique of newcomer Brandon Routh (bottom). Singer says the outfit wasn't complete without Routh.

"I always had the general idea of the suit," the director said. "However, when the conceptual art was evolving around the same time that I cast Brandon, I privately had paintings rendered with Brandon's face, which certainly brought it to life."

'House of Wax' sneak preview



MURRAY

"HOUSE of Wax," Warner Bros. horror-thriller starring Chad Michael Murray and Paris Hilton, will be screened in special sneak previews today and tomorrow at selected theaters.

The movie is about a road trip to the biggest college football championship of the year that takes a turn for the worse when a group of friends camp out for the night on their way to the game.

It opens May 25 across the country.

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
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CINEMA 1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN - PG13 10:30,1:25,4:20,7:15,10:10
CINEMA 2 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR - R13 11:10,1:30,3:40,5:50,8:00,10:10
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
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Gus Van Sant entry reflects on Kurt Cobain

CANNES, France—Gus Van Sant's new movie is a fictional reflection on how Nirvana rocker Kurt Cobain might have spent the days before his 1994 suicide: watching TV, wandering through his mansion like a ghost, hiding from everyone who tries to help.

The impressionistic "Last Days" is competing for the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival two years after Van Sant won the honor with "Elephant," loosely based on the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School.

Van Sant blended fact and fiction again in his new film. Inspired by Cobain, the character in "Last Days" is a famous but lonely musician named Blake, played by Michael Pitt ("The Dreamers"). Pitt has Cobain's shaggy blonde hair, his stubble, his slouch.

Like Cobain, Blake is fond of macaroni and cheese, scribbles his thoughts in a notebook and sings in a desperate wail. Also like Cobain, he escapes from a detox center before his final spiral into despair.

No one knows

Beyond that, most events of the movie come from Van Sant's imagination. Nobody knows how Cobain spent the days before he wrote a suicide note, injected himself with heroin and fired a 20-gauge shotgun into his mouth.

"Those particular days are kind of lost days," Van Sant said. So the movie "was all a poetic exercise."

The film has an understated feel. There are no scenes of Blake taking drugs, and the death scene is off camera. The focus is on small moments: Blake watches a Boyz II Men video, makes pasta, has a surreal dialogue with a door-to-door salesman.

Blake spends much of the movie muttering to himself and has little interaction with others. When hangers-on party at Blake's rundown mansion, dancing to the Velvet Underground's "Venus in Furs," they all but ignore him. The only times they approach him are to ask for money or favors.

Alienated

Sonic Youth singer-bassist Kim Gordon plays a record company representative who tries to convince Blake to check into rehab. She has a car waiting, but he ignores her.

"You really can only do so much to help someone," Gordon said. Winning success and fame, "Kurt was kind of removed or alienated by what he thought he wanted, and was kind of entrapped by it."

Van Sant said he has been thinking about the project for nearly a decade. At one stage, he wanted to do a Cobain biopic.

"I sort of entertained that for just a brief moment before I thought it would just turn into a kind of regular biopic that wasn't anything special," he said. "It would have been too much information."

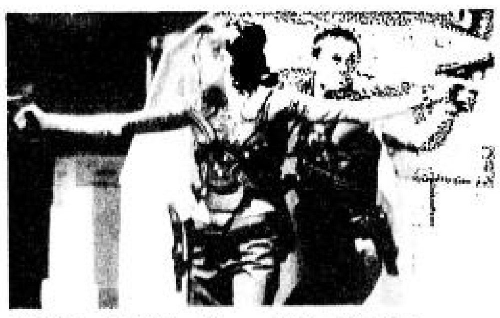
Van Sant isn't sure how Cobain's fans and family will react to the film. He has talked to Courtney Love, Cobain's widow, several times over the years about his project.

The volatile Love, who has had her own drug problems, wasn't with Cobain during his final days, and Van Sant did not cast an equivalent of her.

"There is a voice on the phone that you can think of as Blake's wife if you pushed it in that direction," he said. "But yeah, we were afraid that she was going to sue us." *AP*

AMERICAN filmmaker Gus van Sant (right) goes for the Palme d'Or again, with his lead actor Michael Pitt. REUTERS

ACTRESS Salma Hayek, jury member, at "Last Days" screening. AFP



JOLIE and Pitt in "Mr. and Mrs. Smith"

When happiness is a warm gun

NEW YORK—For Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, happiness is a warm gun.

In an interview published in the current issue of Vanity Fair, Jolie says she and Pitt came to trust each other while taking gun training for the upcoming "Mr. and Mrs. Smith." They play married assassins in the movie.

"You had to trust each other to cross under or over and only move when the other person moves, so the trust, when somebody's got a loaded gun at your back… It made us trust each other quickly," Jolie said in the magazine, released last week.

Pitt, 41, and his wife, Jennifer Aniston, separated in January.

In the Vanity Fair interview, Jolie denied that she had said she was a shoulder for Pitt to cry on.

"I knew nothing about their marriage," the 29-year-old Jolie said. *AP*

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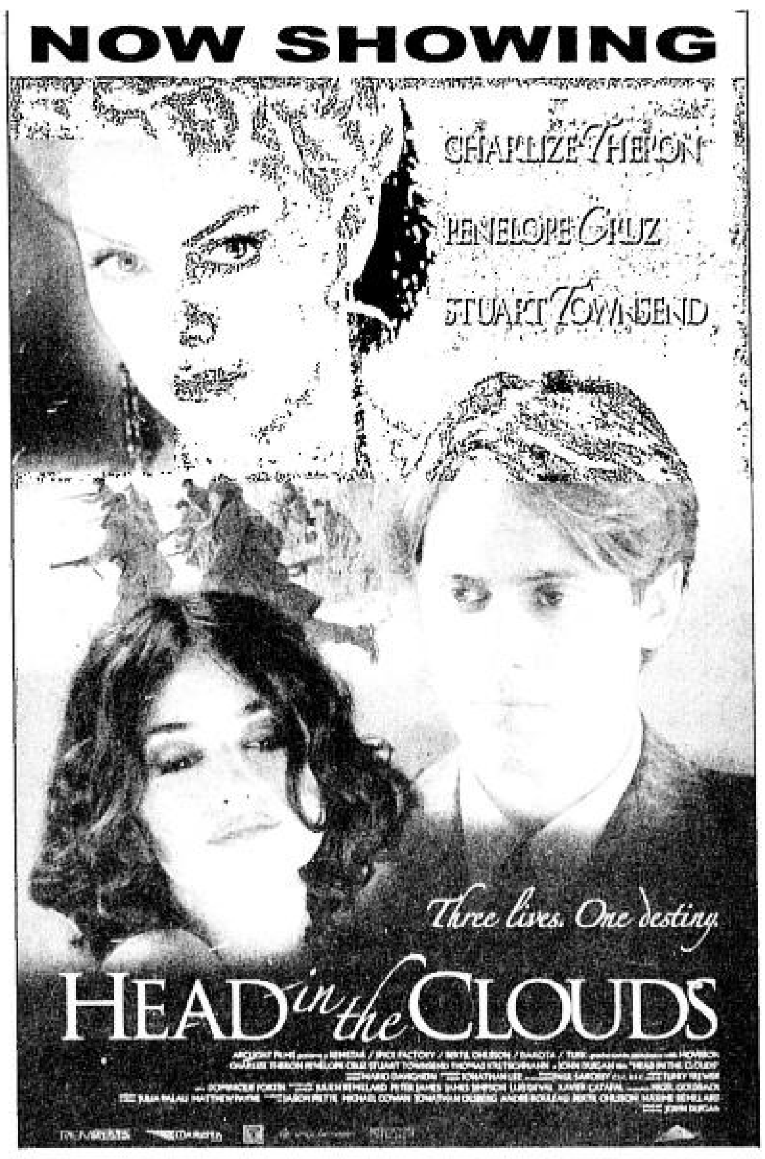

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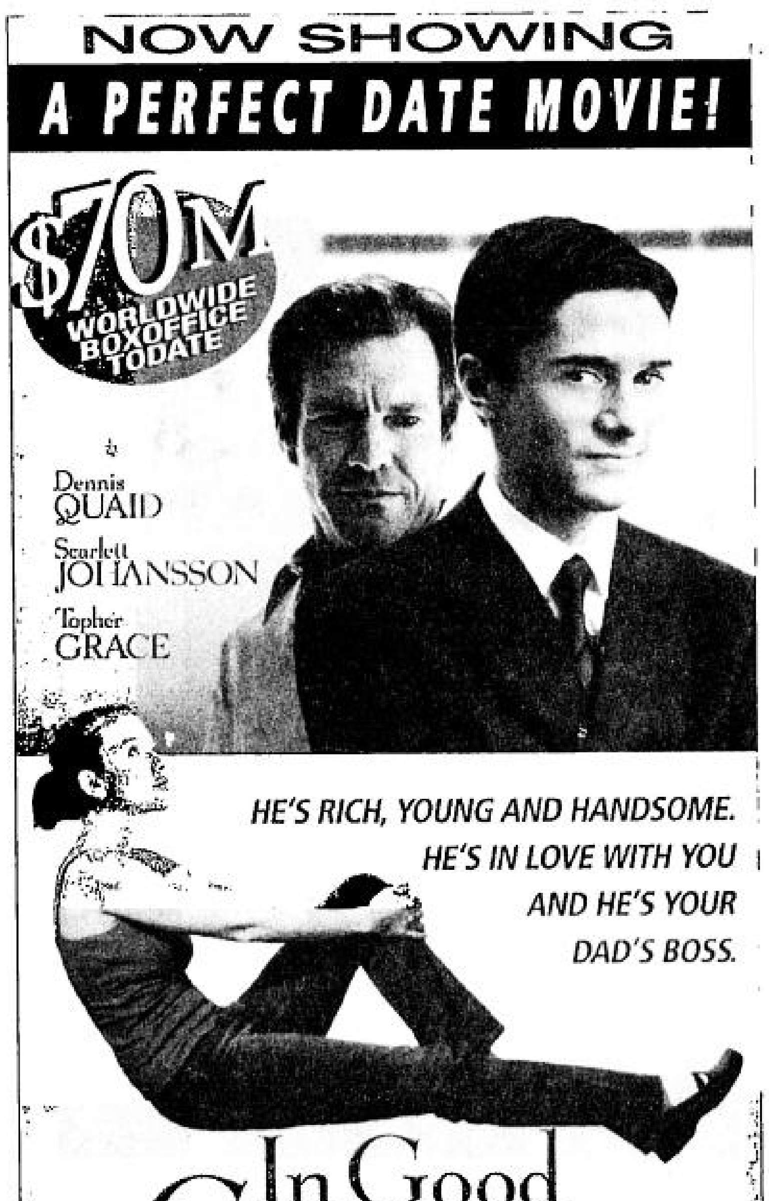

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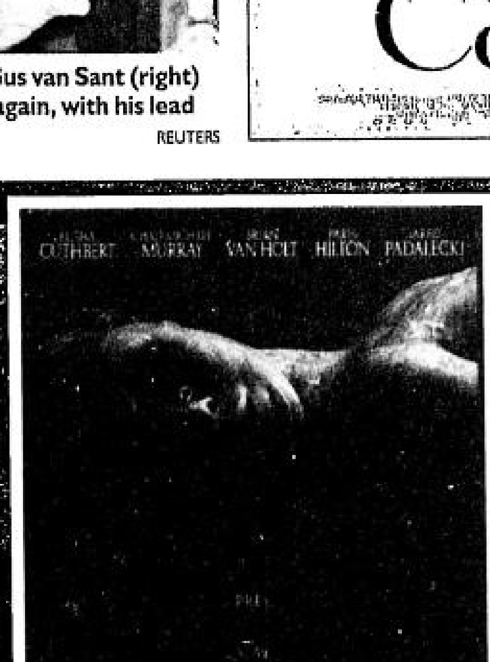

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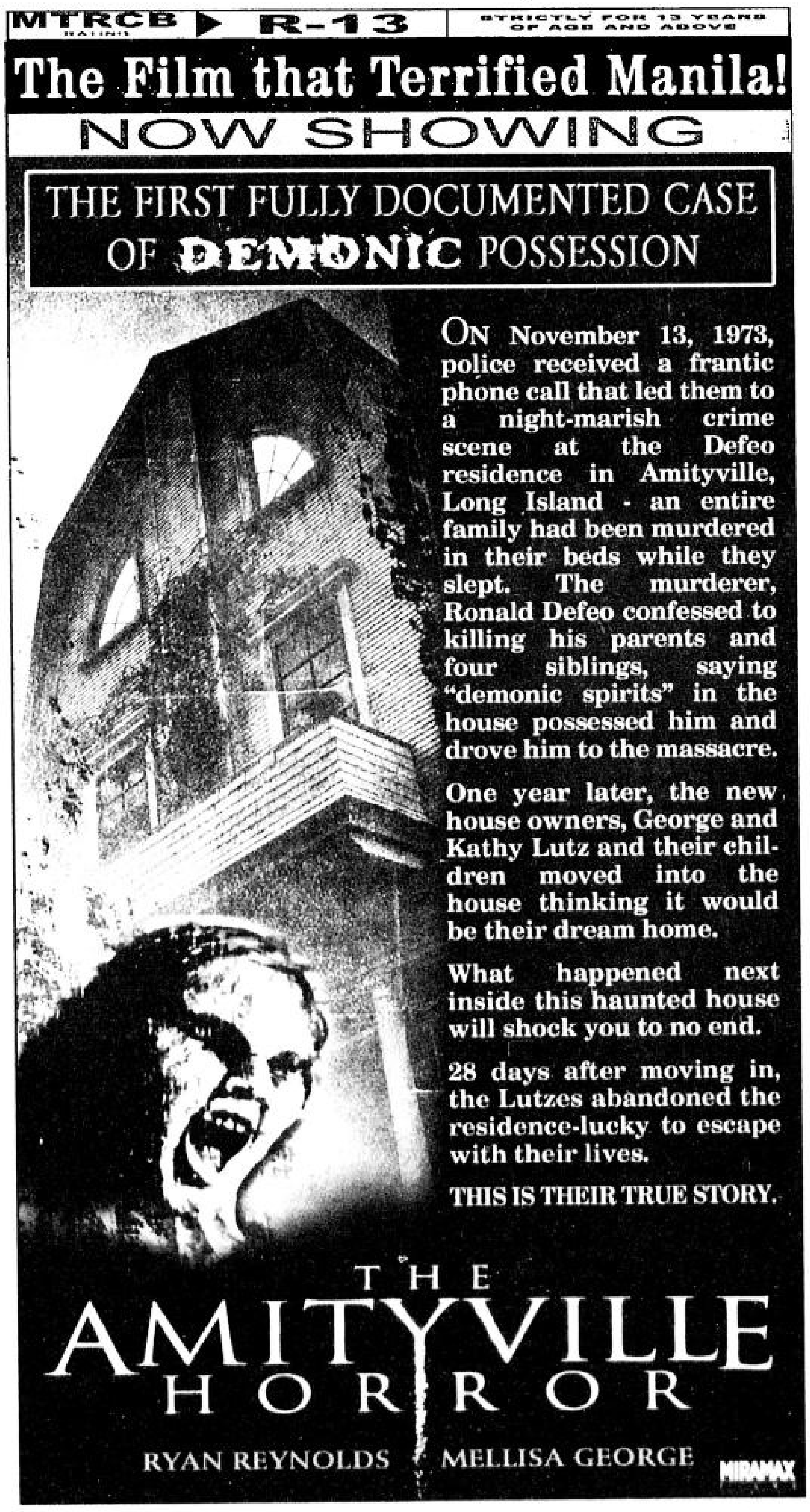

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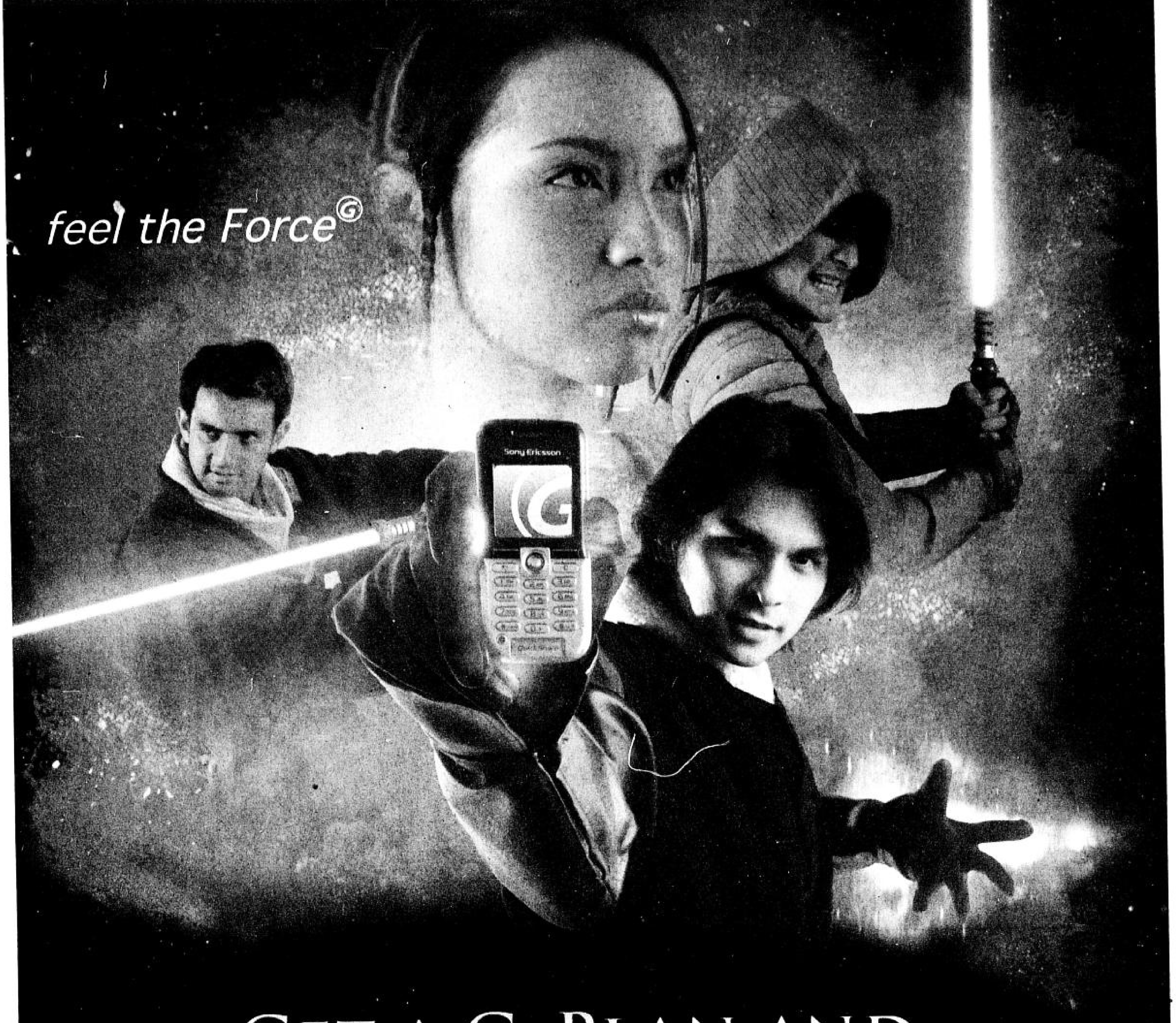

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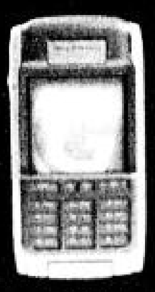

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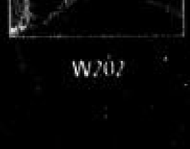

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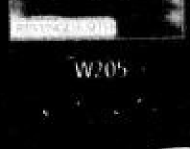

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Manufacturing investments up 134%

But total 1st quarter figures still down by half to P65.61B, says DTI

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FIRST quarter investments in the manufacturing sector increased 134 percent to P45.71 billion from the P19.5 billion posted in the same period last year, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Despite the surge in manufacturing ventures, total investments approved by the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority in the first quarter amounted to only P65.61 billion—almost half the P129.9 billion registered in the first three months of 2004.

Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos explained that last year, GNPower Ltd. sank in P96.52 billion to put up a power complex with a combined cycle power plant that would run on liquefied natural gas.

GNPower Ltd.'s single biggest investment commitment in 2004 accounted for the huge difference in the investment picture this year.

Santos said that combined investments in the manufacturing and services sectors approved from January to March, "amounted to P48.03 billion—a 108-percent increase from the P23.07 billion posted in 2004."

He said the manufacturing and services sectors—which account for 73 percent of the 105 projects approved this year—would gen-

MANUFACTURING/ B11

PRICE WATCH
Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos and Sen. Mar Roxas discuss the prices of chicken products with a market vendor at the New Dagonoy Market in San Andres, Manila. The officials went to the market to check the prices of basic goods and commodities, making sure that prices remain stable even with the recent increase in transport fares. Santos said the fare hike would have no direct impact on the price of basic goods. The DTI has also stepped up its monitoring to prevent profiteers from taking advantage of the fare increase.

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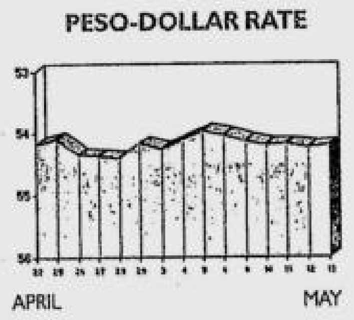

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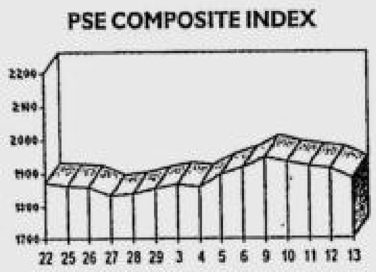
STOCK MARKET

Share prices may continue to slide



PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B3)

NEWS that the Senate last week had approved the compromise version of the value-added tax (VAT) bill failed to perk up a market on a downturn.

Analysts are now expecting share prices to continue to soften this week.

"I think the market will move sideways in the absence of a significant catalyst," said Alfred Dy, head of research at CLSA Phils. Inc. "On the VAT, investors were slightly disappointed on the final form because its implementation will be staggered over time, but it's better than nothing."

BPI Trade for its part said in its weekly report that the dearth of positive news will keep investors on the sidelines, since they have already considered first quarter income results.

Last week, the main index took a beating as it sank 31.38 points or 1.64 percent to 1,882.39.

Leading the market slide were the telco shares of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Globe Telecom; property stocks of Ayala Land Inc., SM Prime Holdings Inc., Belle Corp., Megaworld Corp., and Metro Pacific Corp.; bank shares of the Bank of the Philippine Islands,

SHARE/ B9

US firm quits China to set up shop in RP

ENGINE maker Briggs & Stratton USA has decided to relocate its manufacturing plant from China to the Philippines in a move to keep the prices of its products competitive, Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said.

B&S has already entered into a partnership with local firm Allied Motors Manufacturing Philippines Inc. (AMMPI), which has a facility at the Laguna International Industrial Park in Biñan, Laguna, that could accommodate the production of single-cylinder gasoline engines.

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, B&S is the world's largest producer of air-cooled gasoline engines for outdoor power equipment.

AMMPI's sister company, Allied Motors Philippines, is currently the sole distributor of B&S products since 1999.

Cast iron B&S gasoline engines, primarily used for fishing and farming activities, have been in the local market for the past 40 years.

Santos said that fishermen and

US FIRM/ B11

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State firms seek reprieve from dividend payment

By Michelle V. Remo

SOME state-owned companies are seeking temporary exemption from paying dividends to the national government, while they still work on improving their income-generation performance.

However, the Department of Finance, which monitors government-owned and –controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs), said it would have to thoroughly review the request first before recommending it to Malacañang for approval.

Finance Undersecretary Nieves Osorio said the DOF normally allows only meager-earning GOCCs and GFIs to remit less-than-required dividends but they were not totally exempted.

She said the request for exemption would have to be backed up by financial reports and explanation of their financial standing, considering that the government aimed to collect substantial dividends from them this year.

GOCCs and GFIS are required by law to remit at least 50 percent of their net income to the national government.

The finance official did not identify the state-owned firms seeking exemption from dividend remittance, but added that they were among those that posted negative retained earnings last year.

Based on DOF data, those that have negative retained earnings in 2004 were: the National Home Mortgage and Financing Corp., whose negative retained earnings stood at P8.3 billion; Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency, P3.2 billion; Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., P1.2 billion; Philippine Postal Corp., P800 million; Philippine Rice Research Institute, P314 million and Philippine Economic Zone Authority, P942 million.

The DOF has intensified its monitoring of the financial performance of state-owned firms, whose poor revenue performance was partly blamed for the government's fiscal problem.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima earlier said the DOF would no longer tolerate heavy losses of GOCCs, saying their mission was to generate money, in the form of dividends, for the government.

The DOF is hoping to collect P7 billion in dividends and guarantee fees from GOCCs and GFIs this year.

The DOF has initiated programs to improve the financial performance of state-owned firms. These included a scorecard system for the officials and employees of these companies, under which GOCCs and GFIs that will surplus their targets would surpass their operation and fiscal targets will be given monetary incentives.

The finance chief also said the DOF would regularly review the financial reports of the state-owned firms.

Dipolog SMEs: From sardines to wigs

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

ONE OF my favorite places in Mindanao, whether to do business or spend quality R&R, is the beautiful Orchid City of Dipolog. Not only does it offer a calming retreat, it is also one of the perfect places to invest in. Located in the province of Zamboanga del Norte, Dipolog is a convenient location to link with major domestic markets such as Cebu, Zamboanga and Negros Occidental.

Export-wise, the city has a great potential to reach the international markets in the East Asean region, being at the northwestern tip of Mindanao. With these factors strategically and naturally in place, it is not a wonder why the majority of the 9,000 business establishments and 90 percent of wholesalers in Zamboanga del Norte operate in this city. Currently, there are 2,450 small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the city.

Being the capital of Zamboanga del Norte, Dipolog City is the commercial and educational center of the province. Of its total land area of 13,632 hectares, 66 percent is used for agricultural production.

That reflects Dipolog's similarity with other Mindanao cities, thus, making Mindanao the "Food Basket of the Philippines." The city looks into a vision of becoming a trading hub in the region. It collaborated with its "twin" city, Dapitan, to strengthen its competitive edge in business and trade. In this partnership, Dipolog will pursue commercial and business trading while Dapitan will explore and promote its heritage and tourism development.

Having established an advantage, Dipolog enhanced its capability in producing quality products. Its major agri-products, such as coconut and corn, are export winners of the city. Dipolog is also popularly known for its bottled Spanish sardines.

A confessed fanatic, I am one of the many who cannot leave Dipolog without buying bottles to boxes of its Spanish sardines. The choices are wide-ranging, but they are all delightful in the taste buds and competitively priced. The high product quality is possessed by all fourteen (14) companies in the bottled Spanish sardines processing industry. Six of these companies export their sardines overseas.

To further promote Dipolog's niche products to local and international consumers, the Department of Trade and Industry IX is prioritizing the sardines and mango (dried, puree and juice) industries, without neglecting the conditions of those working within these focused industries. The city government of Dipolog shares the same priority sectors, plus other products, such as coconut coir, ceramic wares, aquaculture and marble.

One group that was formed through the encouragement and support of private sector organizations, and is now providing livelihood assistance to its members, is the Dipolog Seaside Women Association. The association started producing bottled sardines in 2000, with assured market from distributors. Its women-entrepreneurs now pride themselves of augmenting their household incomes, in addition to contributing to the success of the bottled sardines industry.

The wig industry

A few months ago, the Dipolog City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCCI) informed me about the growing success of the only company in Dipolog that manufactures and exports wigs to Europe, the United States and Japan. Yes, they do make beautiful hairpieces in that area. I think this should be one reason why I should go back to Dipolog again. I just might find the wig that will suit my taste.

This company started in Dipolog City three years ago and later expanded to Dapitan City and Polanco. Today, it employs more than 150 people.

What struck me is the bold diversification of investments in the area—from sardines, coconuts and mangoes to wig production. Stereotyped in the minds of the people as a city capable for blessing only agri-based and bottled sardines companies, Dipolog definitely proved its capability to nurture any investment venture.

I believe this is a result of harmonious public-private sector coordination, aligning visions and programs for the development of the city. The DCCCI continuously promotes investments and a healthy business environment, while the provincial and city governments provide assistance and incentives to businessmen, farmers, fisherfolk and workers for the integrated development of all economic activities in Dipolog.

From sardines to wigs, there is no limitation to success in the growing and promising city of Dipolog. Indeed, it is set and ready to realize its vision to be the "trading hub of Northwestern Mindanao," and perhaps, even more.

(Joji Ilagan-Bian is an advocate for Mindanao; member, Export Development Council; former chair of the Mindanao Business Council; vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women; chair of the Mindanao TVET. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines
Recalls 482 units of '98 Galants

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corporation (MMPC) announced the recall of 482 units of '98 Galants to replace the power transistor and connector for the air conditioner blower fan located under the glove box. The original connector may become loose when nudged and heat up resulting in the shutdown of the air conditioner blower fan motor. In the worst case the legs of the front passenger may get scalded by the heated connector. Although there has been no reported occurrence of blower fan connector overheating in the Philippines, MMPC was directed by Mitsubishi Motors Corporation to conduct the recall locally. MMPC informed the Office of Secretary Juan B. Santos of the Department of Trade and Industry of the recall plan.

Mr. Kengo Takase, President and CEO of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines said that MMPC has already mobilized its Customer Service Department to trace the units from its customer data base. He said that all the Mitsubishi Motors Philippines service centers nationwide have been alerted to replace the blower fan connectors and power transistor of the affected units completely FREE of charge. This procedure would take at most 2hrs to complete.

The 482 affected 1998 GALANT 2.0 Super Saloon and 2.5 VR models were identified to have the following SERIAL/CHASSIS NUMBERS:

	Model	Vehicle Identification No. (VIN)		[illegible]		Remarks
		From	To	From	To	
1	Galant 2.5 VR A/T	PAEEA5ASRVA000001	PAEEA5ASRVA000390	Oct. '97	Jan '00	390 units manufactured by MMPC
2	Galant 2.0 Super Saloon A/T	PAEEA2ASRVA000001	PAEEA2ASRVA000090	Oct. '97	Dec. '97	90 units manufactured by MMPC
3	Galant 2.5 VR M/T	JMYSNEA5AVZ000106	n/a	Mar.'97		CBU from Japan
4	Galant 2.5 VR A/T	JMYSREA5AVZ000293	n/a	Mar.'97		CBU from Japan

If your vehicle is part of the listed serial numbers please call MMPC Customer Service Department c/o Roy Aquino, Dick Vinuya or Dave Doctor at Telephone Nos. **658-0719, 658-0087,** or **658-0109** to **16** local **236** to arrange schedule of inspection.

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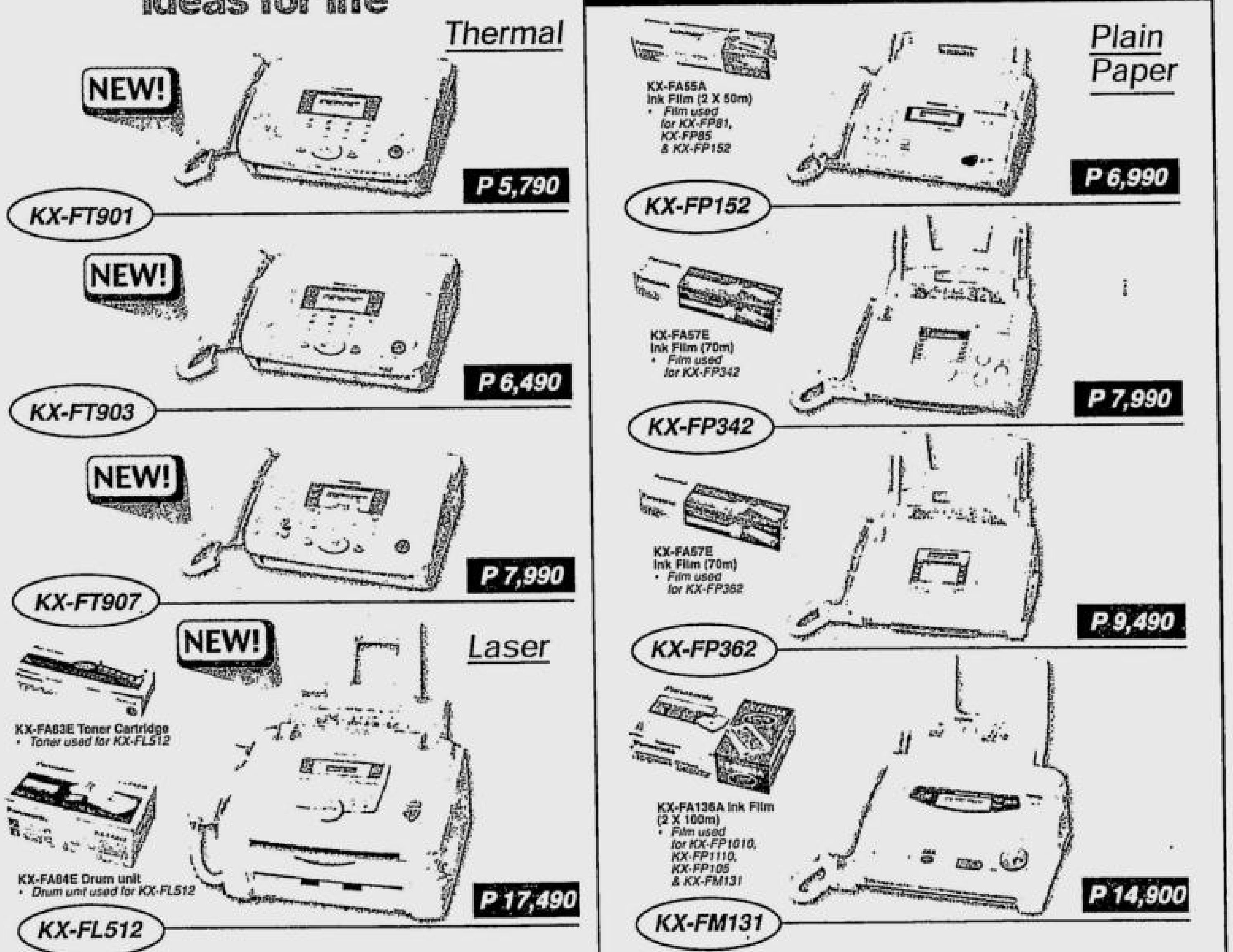

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Copy Speed				2 PPM	4 PPM	4 PPM	2 PPM	10 PPM
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Digital Answering System			●			●	●	
Sequential Broadcast		10 locations	10 locations	20 locations	20 locations	20 locations	60 locations	20 locations
Printer Function							●	●
Scanner Function							●	●
PC Fax Function							●	
*Caller-ID Ready	●	●	●					●
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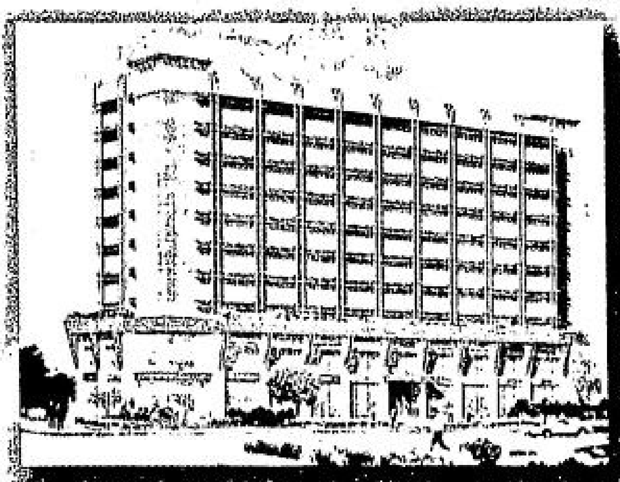

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PNR fails to get funding for $1-B Bicol line rehab

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE National Railways said it had failed to secure a financing commitment from China for the $1-billion rehabilitation of its Bicol line.

This hinders the agency's efforts to turn around its operations and accelerate its financial recovery.

PNR general manager Jose Ma. Sarasola II, however, said the agency would continue to negotiate with the Chinese government, as well as with other foreign multilateral creditors for a low-cost loan that would allow PNR to start the rehabilitation of the 480-kilometer Bicol or South line as soon as possible.

For its part, the Chinese government decided to lend $500 million to another Philippine project, the North Rail venture.

PNR managed to keep its losses at about P200 million in 2004 or the same level as the previous year's.

PNR resumed on May 2 the operations of its Bicol line, which were suspended in November when one of its trains fell into a ravine in Quezon province.

The Nov. 12 accident killed seven and wounded 177 of its 400 passengers. The PNR said it had been losing between P7 million and P8 million a month since November when its most profitable line was closed for probe and repairs. The last time this line was rehabilitated was 10 years ago.

Sarasola said the agency intended to divide the $1-billion requirement for the Bicol line upgrade in several tranches.

"We can start with $200 million to rehabilitate the line from Calamba to Lucena," he said. He added that portions of the Bicol line could be upgraded under a build-operate-and-transfer arrangement.

He said the agency had received several offers for BOT or its variants to repair the Bicol line. Once the rehab is completed, PNR planned to privatize the operations of the South line.

For now, he said PNR was focusing on upgrading the 32-kilometer Caloocan to Alabang line to speed up the travel time to 30 minutes for this stretch.

The upgrade of the Caloocan to Alabang line is being partly funded by a $150-million loan from the South Korean government.

After the upgrade, this line could carry roughly 187,000 passengers per day using 21 units of new diesel trains to be acquired. The project also covers improvements in 16 stations.

In 1995, Sarasola said the government spent P292 million to improve the tracks between Naga in Bicol and Plaridel in Quezon. The amount included the rehabilitation of four bridges and concrete sleepers. But the area of Padre Burgos where the Nov. 12 accident happened was not included in the rehab.

NGO urges BCDA to reject John Hay consortium offer

A NONGOVERNMENT organization has warned the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) against accepting a compromise offer of Fil-Estate group-led Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) on its P1.2 billion worth of arrears.

The Timpuyog Mannalon Amianan, one of the largest Northern Luzon-based NGOs, said it would "haul BCDA to court" if it would enter into a deal with the beleaguered CJHDevco based on its settlement proposal.

The BCDA earlier said the offer from the Fil-Estate-backed consortium involved a scheme that called for the reduction of its arrears from P1.2 billion to a measly P192,000.

BCDA added that it "sees no clear indication that the group is poised to settle its arrears."

The arrears were incurred in connection with the 25-year lease-contract for the John Hay complex development, which was awarded to the consortium in 1996. The consortium, which includes the College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) and Penta-Capital, has reportedly urged BCDA to accept a scheme significantly reducing the annual rental rate for the property.

Consumer activist Melany Victoria, Timpuyog spokesperson, said any settlement that would drastically reduce the consortium's P1.2-billion debt "is a setback to the development of Baguio City and the rest of Northern Luzon." She earlier urged CJHDevco "to

NGO/B11

The price of competition

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

WITH consumer prices rising all around us, the only thing you can buy more cheaply today than 10 years ago is—fire insurance. It is good for government people in the so-called price coordinating councils, and those who continue to feel strongly against trade liberalization, to understand this price phenomenon.

For three-quarters of a century, the price of fire insurance was dictated by a cartel made up of all the insurance companies. The price list—called the tariff—was embodied in a manual. Every insurance company was sworn to follow the rules of the manual. Penalties for "breaching" the tariff were severe.

But during the post-World War II business boom, competition reared its ugly head. As a result, breaching the tariff became rampant. In 1974, to arrest the drop in prices, Marcos was persuaded to give the cartel more powers under a new insurance code. The fire insurance cartel became the only cartel in our history that had a government license. Not only that, the insurance commission enforced the cartel's rules.

PARP convention: The Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP) is holding its 5th National Convention on May 27, 2005 at the Escaler Lecture Hall, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Free registration starts at 8 a.m. Lunch and snacks are free. Sen. Sergio Osmeña III will be the keynote speaker, former Senate President Jovito Salonga will be guest speaker. Giveaways for the first 100.

Then, in 1994, the Asean free trade agreements took effect. Insurance became the only industry that was, and is, totally liberalized. Foreign insurers, brokers, adjusters and surveyors were allowed to set up shop here. They entered through one of three doors: they could buy into an existing Filipino company, put up a wholly owned subsidiary or set up a full-fledged branch. Some of the world's largest life and non-life insurance companies accepted the invitation. They brought in their own brand of expertise. Today, the landscape has completely changed.

At the same time, the Insurance Commission withdrew the license of the cartel, and threw the manual out of the window. Under the searing sunlight of a free and open market, fire insurance premiums started shrinking. According to the official annual report of the Insurance Commission, in 1993, the last year of the cartel, the average rate of fire insurance was 0.40 percent. By 2002, after nine years of intense competition, the average fire insurance rate was down to 0.14 percent, a drop of almost two-thirds. And it is still dropping.

Inspite of the drop in prices, the total premium volume of the fire insurance industry in that nine-year period, rose from P5.04 billion to P9.22 billion, an increase of 83 percent. This means more Filipinos bought fire insurance then ever before.

As more Filipinos bought more fire insurance, profitability improved significantly. In 1993, the claims paid were 53.65 percent of premiums. In 2002, this figure was down to 29.23 percent.

The Insurance Commission did not have to "coordinate" or "monitor" prices. The commission just left market forces alone.

What does the experience in fire insurance tell us? It tells us that nothing brings down prices more effectively than brass-knuckle competition. In the end, everybody wins.

The so-called price coordinating councils do not bring prices down by calling a meeting of hog raisers and consumers in an air-conditioned room. A visit by the secretary of finance, or even the President, to a public market, dutifully recorded on TV, has absolutely no effect on prices. A raid on a warehouse of supposedly overpriced goods does not bring down the price of those goods. The trade and industry secretary cannot bring down prices by pleading with manufacturers. The militant

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES/B5

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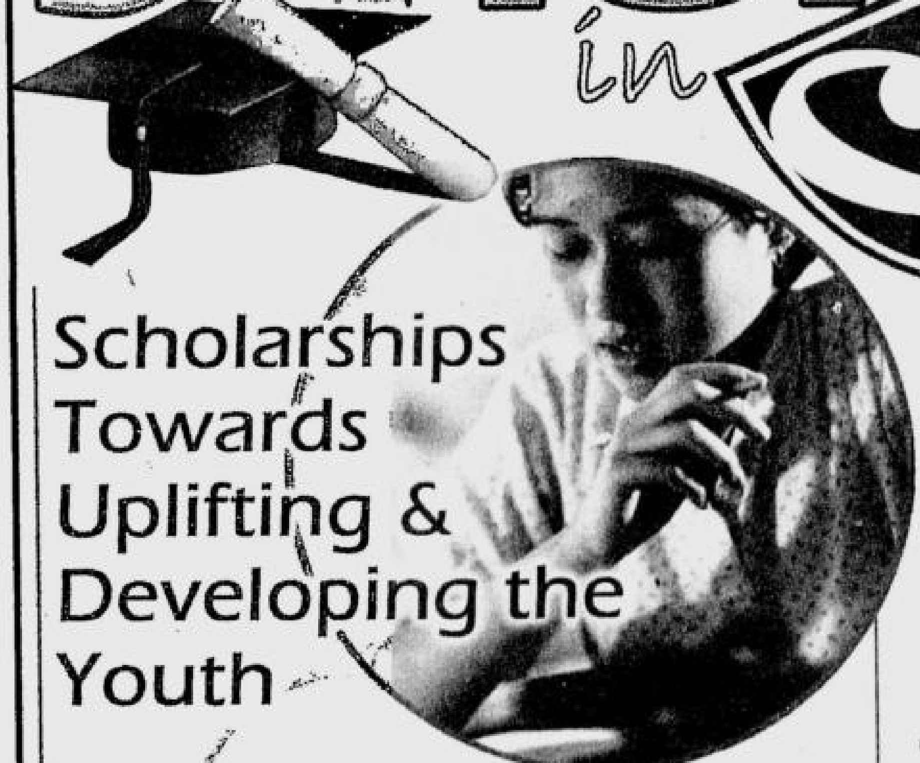

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Danding's vs Lucio's pay

TAIPAN Lucio Tan is a more parsimonious paymaster to himself and to his key Tanduay executives than his chief competitor in the liquor industry, Ginebra San Miguel's Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.

Cojuangco and his top executives pay themselves nearly four times more than what Tan pays himself and his three other top Tanduay officers, despite Tanduay Holdings generating half as much sales as Ginebra San Miguel, according to the financial documents submitted by the two listed companies.

This Thursday, Cojuangco will ask Ginebra shareholders to approve an estimated P31.8 million compensation for him and four other top Ginebra officers. (Based on a disclosure footnote, Cojuangco apparently waives his salary and perks in favor of his younger brother, Ginebra vice chair Enrique Cojuangco.)

In contrast, Tanduay early this month approved a total of P7.82 million in 2005 compensation for Tan and three other top officers. Top management compensation in Tanduay, despite a 46 percent jump in net profit in three years, has remained pegged at the 2002 levels.

Ginebra, the country's biggest gin manufacturer, has rewarded its top management with over 21 percent compensation increase in three years despite profits staying flat in the same period.

Specifically, Tan pays himself P200,000 a month as Tanduay chair and chief executive officer. His brother Mariano Tanenglian gets P150,000 a month as vice chair and treasurer.

Tanduay president/chief operating officer Wilson Young receives a modest P130,000 a month, the same as what his chief finance officer, Nestor Mendones, receives.

The Tanduay corporate secretary, Maria Cecilia Pesayco, takes home P30,000 a month, the same as her assistant's.

Tanduay board members, two of whom are Tan's sons Lucio Jr. and Michael, each receives an even more modest P10,000 a month fee and an additional P5,000 per diem for every board meeting.

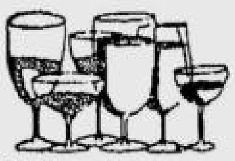
Ginebra, despite being a sequestered company, does not provide a comparable breakdown.

Tanduay last year posted net sales of over P6.7 billion and net income of nearly P660 million, as against Ginebra's P13 billion sales and P1.68 billion net.

In 2002, Tanduay's net sales reached more than P5.4 billion. It earned a net income of nearly P451 million. That same year, Ginebra netted P10.9 billion in sales, and posted P1.66 billion in net profit.

Ginebra actually made less money despite selling more. While sales rose by over P1.1 billion last year, Ginebra's gross profit dropped to P4.59 billion from the previous year's P4.65 billion.

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

Last year, Cojuangco and his key aides also had to write off over P288 million in trade receivables and obsolete inventories, mainly because of its discontinued water and juice business.

Money-go-round

- THE SUPREME Court has denied a last-minute attempt by Bro. Mariano "Mike" Velarde to wiggle out of paying a P1-million loan the El Shaddai pastor obtained from a savings bank way back in 1983.

Velarde said his counsel has moved to Cebu and consequently failed to receive the court decision in time.

The high court said it was Velarde and his counsel's lookout if they failed to notify the court of the change of address and subsequently file a motion for reconsideration before the deadline.

- The Manila Standard Today has still not accepted the resignation of one of its managing editors, Lourdes Molina-Fernandez, who left in a huff over a month ago because of the merger turmoil.

Heard through the grapevine

THE TOP advisers of Alfonso Yuchengco, all Management Man of the Year awardees like the beleaguered taipan himself, are leaving for the United States to join and give moral support to their boss as he receives an honorary degree from the University of San Francisco on Friday.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Questions of Policies

From page B4

groups, with their red streamers and bullhorns, are not heard at the *palengke*.

The way to bring down prices is for the government to create a free and open market for goods and services by breaking up the cartels—oil, cement, banking, chicken and hog raising, drugs and medicine, to mention just a few—that are all around us. If necessary, bring in foreign competition. If that does not bring down prices, nothing will.

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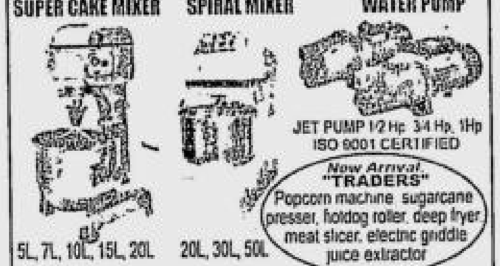
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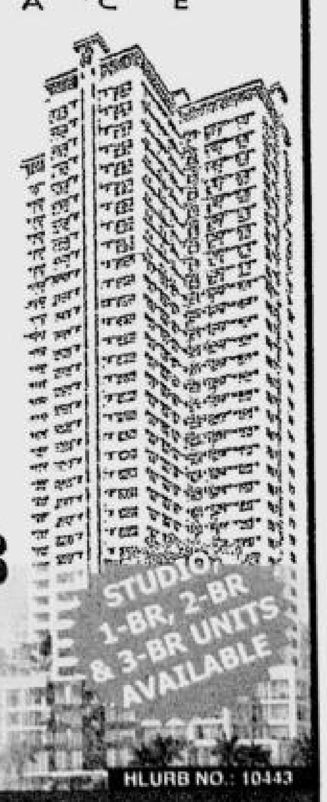
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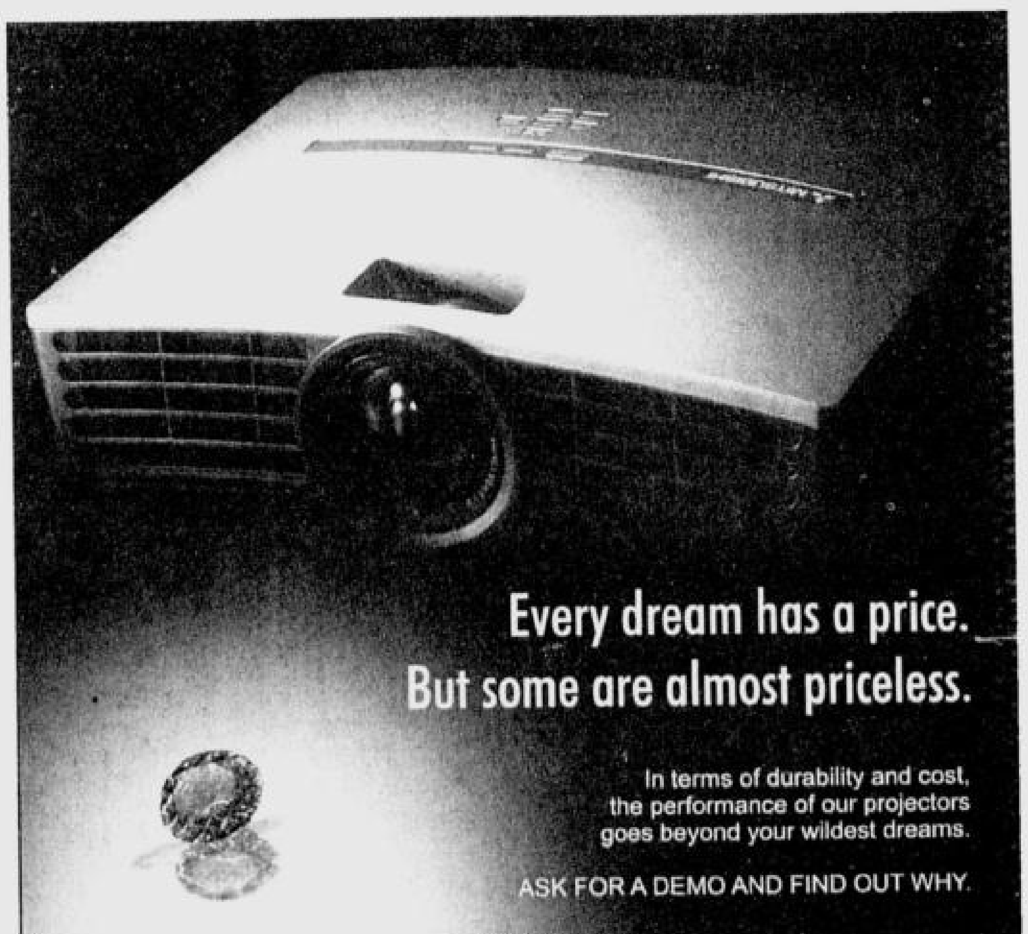
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Costing our chaotic traffic

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

THREE weekends ago, I had the misfortune of spending about three hours virtually immobilized, along with thousands of other travelers, in a traffic gridlock between Calamba and Los Baños.

It didn't have to happen if not for that very Filipino habit of creating a new line at the opposite lane at the slightest traffic backup.

It just takes one impatient and inconsiderate driver to lead the way, and in no time both sides of the road are filled with vehicles moving in one direction.

Repeat that in the other direction, and everyone is soon trapped in an anarchic mess.

And so this stretch of road that normally takes 20 minutes to negotiate took us over two hours. And I'm told this happens every weekend these days.

Finger pointing

What was particularly exasperating about the incident was the complete absence of traffic enforcers to manage the traffic flow. Not that there was nobody around to do it.

There was actually a PNP outpost along the road with three policemen in it, watching the cars inch their way by in idle amusement.

When I alighted from our hardly moving van and politely asked them if they were not going to do anything to sort out the mess, the answer I got was that it was the job of personnel from the Land Transport Management Office (LTMO)—none of whom were anywhere in sight.

When I insisted that no one from LTMO was around, the indifferent answer I got was, "*Wala namang mangyayari kahit makialam kami diyan* (Nothing will happen even if we intervene)."

It dawned upon me that if policemen right at the scene witnessing the problem before their very eyes didn't care enough to lift a finger and take responsibility, what more with local officials (calling Calamba Mayor Jun Chipeco) or those from the provincial government (calling Gov. Teresita Lazaro) or relevant national agencies (calling LTMO, PNP, DPWH)?

Will none of them assume responsibility over this perennial problem, and keep pointing fingers at each other, just like the three indifferent policemen?

Are we suffering travelers condemned to just accept it as a fact of Filipino life?

And yet all it would take to prevent such gridlock is a few traffic enforcers who would ensure that lanes are properly respected, and consistently apprehend those who don't.

Lack of infrastructure

This obviously does not happen in Laguna alone; hours of productive time are lost daily due to traffic delays in Tarlac, in Carmen-Rosales in Pangasinan, and in hundreds of other places around the country, be they in the cities or in the provinces.

Metro Manila is of course most notorious; many observers (including Thais themselves) say we have long dislodged Bangkok as the traffic congestion capital in this part of the world.

And it's no surprise; beyond our failures in proper traffic management, we have clearly lagged behind our neighbors in providing transport infrastructure. While Bangkok has managed to build a subway train system to supplement its efficient elevated mass rail transit, Manila continues to settle for three short LRT/MRT lines which are not even logically interconnected.

Our failure to provide enough vital infrastructures such as mass transit systems, wider roads and bridges, and multi-level intersections imposes costs on each of us who have to contend with traffic congestion daily.

It may not be obvious, but it all adds up to tremendous economic costs that far outweigh the cost of providing these infrastructures.

Assessing the cost

Traffic congestion imposes costs on society in several ways.

It raises vehicle operating costs (VOC), by using up more fuel and causing greater vehicle and road wear and tear.

It slows down the movement of goods, leading to spoilage and deterioration in quality for perishable items.

It forces people to spend otherwise productive time as idle travel time.

While difficult to compute with great precision, each of these can be quantified.

Neda commissioned such a study covering Metro Manila in 2000 with the National Center for Transportation Studies (NCTS) at the University of the Philippines (UP), to help guide its economic analysis of land transport projects.

Both the assessment methodology and the results are quite interesting.

To measure vehicle operating cost, one has to identify the type of vehicle, as fuel consumption and maintenance costs would clearly vary according to vehicle type.

The NCTS study examined four vehicle types, and derived an average for public and private vehicles, with the latter consistently having lower VOCs.

Standing idly in traffic, these vehicles cost P25.35 and P16.88 an hour to operate, respectively, but these figures are by now far outdated by the dramatic rise in fuel prices since then.

Unfortunately, the study stopped short of making an estimate of aggregate VOC from traffic delays, due to insufficient data.

Nor did the study attempt an assessment of costs due to delayed movement of goods and possible quality deterioration and spoilage.

It did make an elaborate assessment of the value of productive time lost by passengers caught in traffic delays.

This involved looking at different income classes and occupational groups and assessing the value of foregone productive time along with average length of delays, number of trips taken, and number of persons involved by occupational group.

All together, the study estimated a loss of P101 billion per year due to value of productive time lost alone, i.e. not counting total VOC from traffic delays and losses from goods spoilage and quality deterioration.

Assuming 1.6 million vehicles, I estimate additional VOC due to traffic delays to come up to roughly P10 billion.

Considering that this was based on 1999 prices and traffic volumes, the overall economic cost of traffic delays under today's circumstances could easily exceed P200 billion, and this is probably a conservative estimate. That's more than the national government's entire budget deficit, or about 4 percent of GNP!

And this estimate only covers Metro Manila. Think of how much more it would be nationwide.

Clearly, the economic cost of our chaotic traffic is just too much for us to stand by idly and do nothing—just like those three Calamba policemen.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

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What is the Value Proposition of SERVER BLADES?

by Veronica Abad Escalante
Product Manager
Industry Standard Servers, HP Philippines

Server blades (or blades) are widely viewed as compact and efficient servers that primarily save space and power. However, the full story behind blades goes far beyond considerations of the individual server. When making a deployment decision, blades should be considered as part of an integrated, consolidated infrastructure or a complete system that includes compute nodes, all virtualized and automated through a common management framework.

Although broadly similar, server blades have specific advantages over traditional form factor systems (tower or rackmounted servers). Such as:

Lower acquisition costs
With as few as eight blade servers, HP BladeSystems with a Fibre Channel connection are more than 15 percent less expensive than comparable rack-mounted infrastructures Plus increased storage utilization can reduce the amount of storage capacity needed by as much as 50 percent. In non-Fibre Channel storage area network (SAN) environments, the upfront costs are approximately more than 10 percent less expensive, depending on networking choices.

Operational cost savings
Reduce initial setup time from 12 hours to 30 minutes per server, and implement changes, updates, and reconfigurations from 4 hours to 30 minutes. Assuming an average administration cost of Php2,365 per hour, the annual costs for 100 servers can be reduced from Php3,784,000 to Php473,000. With networked storage, manage up to 6 times more storage than with server-dedicated storage and transfer your resources savings from storage management to strategic innovation.

Reductions in cable complexity
Reduce cabling by 87 percent and save Php5,500 to Php19,250 per 10/100 network port. Also eliminate the need for KVM switches and cables through Advanced Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) management capability over IP, saving up to an additional Php1,375,000 for each rack.

Data center space savings
Reduce the amount of space required in the data center by more than 50 percent, supporting as many as 96 blades in the same space as 42 1U rack-mounted servers. Greater density frees rack space for technologies such as SANs that can reduce needed storage capacity by as much as 50 percent and extend space savings.

More efficient power usage
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Improved high availability at lower cost
The integrated infrastructure eliminates downtime that occurs due to various causes, such as cable, server, storage, and switch failures; human configuration errors; and software, power, and cooling problems. In addition, time to repair these problems can also be significantly reduced, cutting both planned and unplanned downtime annually by nearly 100 percent. N + 1 redundancy built in across the system eliminates the need for idle, duplicate spares and 1 + 1 redundancy schemes, reducing redundant hardware costs.

HP BladeSystem employs an integrated, modular design that consolidates servers, storage, power, and networking controlled through a common management framework. Multiple resources are pooled, virtualized, and automated to scale for growthto support more efficiently any workload or IT service the business demands. A modular approach also makes it easy for businesses to repurpose and expand resources for new application and service deployments where the cost and efficiency improvements make the biggest impact on the bottom line.

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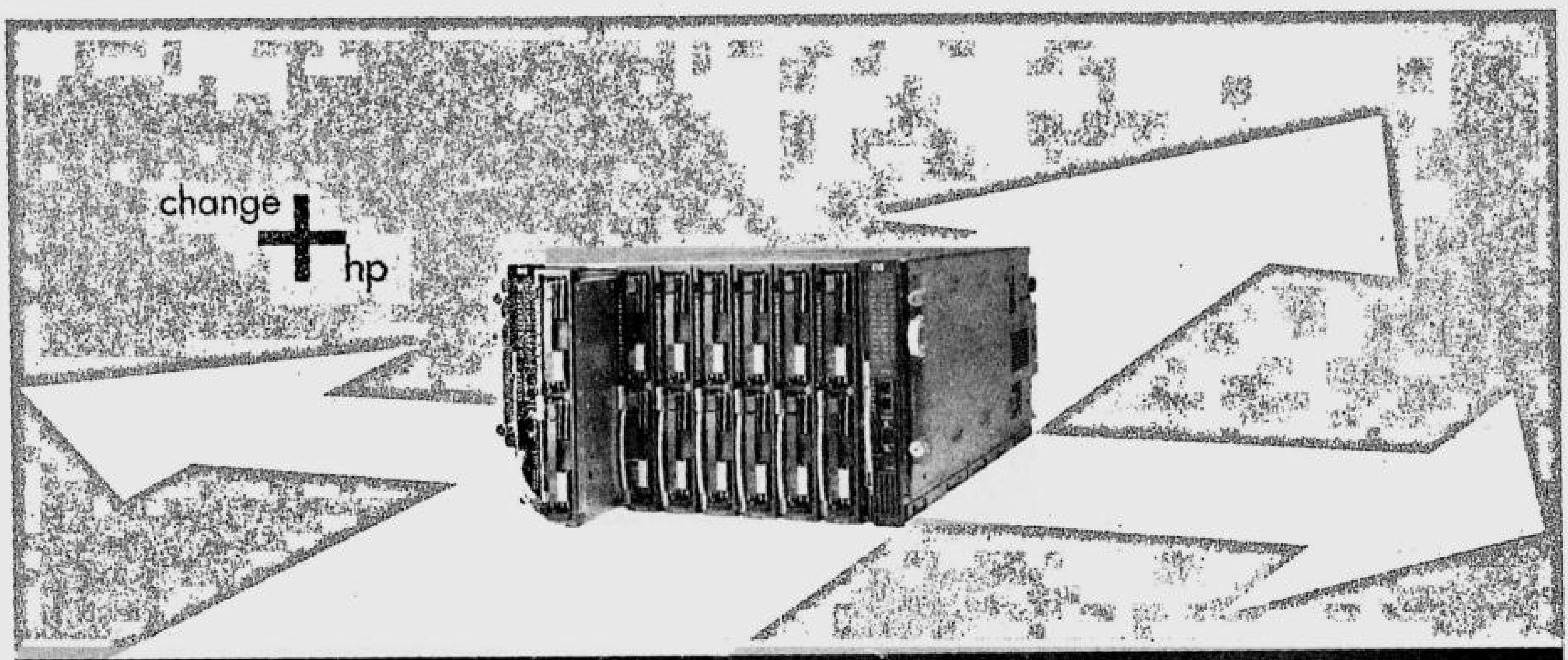

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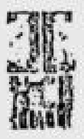

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

The Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Citystate Savings Bank, Inc. will be held at the 20th Floor of Citystate Centre Building, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City, on Tuesday, May 31, 2005, at 2:00 P.M. to take up the following matters:

AGENDA

I. Calling of Meeting to Order
II. Certification of Notice
III. Determination and Declaration of Quorum
IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Stockholders Meeting held on May 25, 2004
V. Consideration of the President's Report on the Results of the Bank's Operations for the Year Ended 31 December 2004 (Annual Reports and Financial Statements of the Bank)
VI. Confirmation/Ratification of the Acts of Officers, Management, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors
VII. Election of Members of the Board of Directors.
VIII. Appointment of External Auditor and Fixing of Remuneration.
IX. Such other business as may properly come before the meeting
X. Adjournment

The record date for the determination of the stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at, said meeting is fixed at the close of business hours on 15 April, 2005.

If it will be inconvenient for you to attend the meeting, you may at your option, appoint another person to represent you thereat by means of a proxy, which should be submitted to the Office of the Corporate Secretary of CSBI, 2nd Floor, Citystate Centre Building, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City not later than 5:00 P.M. of May 20, 2005.

Any stockholder may examine the proxies at the same office on May 23, 2005 beginning at 9:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M.

When signing as attorney – in – fact, executor, administrator, guardian, or in any other representative's capacity, please give full title and file papers showing your authority.

Please be guided accordingly.

ATTY. JOAQUIN T. VENUS, JR.
Corporate Secretary

BSP tightens rules on bank imposition of deposit fees

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is imposing tougher rules on deposit maintenance fees imposed by banks to address depositors' complaints that "hidden" charges were eating up their hard-earned savings.

These hidden charges, according to the complaints received by the BSP, include fees on active deposit accounts falling below the minimum maintaining balance (MMB), inactive deposit accounts regardless of the balance, and on the use of automated teller machines.

The BSP's policy-making Monetary Board, in its meeting on Thursday, approved the rules that prohibited banks from slapping dormancy fees on accounts that met the minimum balance.

While regulating these deposit-taking services for the first time, however, the BSP guidelines do not cover market pricing.

BSP Officer-in-Charge Amando Tetangco said that for dormant accounts that fell below MMB, banks were required to inform depositors by registered mail with return card at least 60 days prior to the imposition of the dormancy charges.

As such, Tetangco said the affected clients would have the opportunity to discuss or contest the imposition of the charges with their banks.

"The new guidelines that require greater transparency will enable depositors to act accordingly to avoid service charges or maintenance fees," he said.

The BSP also standardized the definition of dormant or inactive accounts, which now refer to deposits showing no activity for one year in the case of current accounts or for a period of two years in the case of savings accounts.

Dormancy costs depositors P100 to P200 per month, whether or not their accounts meet the MMB.

For instance, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., the country's biggest bank, charges P100 per month for inactive deposits. However, accounts worth P100,000 and above are exempted.

Second biggest lender Bank of the Philippine Islands also charges P100 a month for dormant peso deposit accounts and $5/month for dollar deposit accounts.

Philippine National Bank and Union Bank of the Philippines charge P200 per month after two years of inactivity.

Tetangco said these guidelines, which require banks to be more transparent in their dealings with depositors when imposing fees and charges, were approved by the MB to "preserve public trust and confidence in the banking system."

In the case of deductions from active deposit accounts that fall below the MMB, the BSP should allow the charges only for those who failed to restore the account to minimum levels after two consecutive months. The banks are also required to give depositors 30 days from receipt of notice to express their objection to any new service or maintenance fees.

JG Summit posts 67% hike in Q1 earnings

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc. said its net earnings for the first quarter jumped 67 percent to P792.6 million from P474.3 million in the same period last year.

It said the growth was fueled by its real-estate business and investment income.

Consolidated revenue grew 15.2 percent to P16.4 billion from P14.23 billion.

Sales from other business units, such as textile and air transportation, also contributed to the earnings growth. Investment income, including those arising from its capital markets business and various investment portfolios, boosted the company's revenue.

Revenue from petrochemicals, however, declined by 33 percent.

Gross profit reached P4.83 billion, slightly higher than last year's P4.7 billion. Rising costs of services in the air transportation and mobile phone businesses limited the company's growth margins.

As a result, operating expenses went up 9.5 percent to P3.97 billion from P3.63 billion. Interest expense incurred in the first quarter was slightly up 3.3 percent to P1.54 billion from P1.49 billion.

Property unit Robinsons Land Corp. reported a 19 percent growth in net earnings to P302.1 million from P254.7 million. Gross revenue amounted to P1.26 billion, up 26 percent from last year's P1 billion. Income from operations rose 17.8 percent to P439.7 million from P373.2 million.

The largest revenue contributor for RLC was its commercial centers division contributing 62 percent of the company's gross revenues. Rental revenues from commercial centers amounted to P778.9 million as against last year's P659.9 million.

Its food and beverage firm Universal Robina Corp. (URC), however, saw net earnings slip 1.7 percent to P542.9 million as operating expenses increased due to the company's regional expansion.

Its telecoms arm, Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc., suffered a net loss of P451.3 million, wider than the previous year's net loss of P299.5 million.

Consolidated costs and expenses amounted to P2.07 billion, up 18.3 percent from P1.75 billion last year due to a 56-percent hike in the costs and expenses of its wireless services amounting to P1.01 billion. The increase consisted substantially of marketing, selling and cost of sales, network related expenses, staff-related and other administrative expenses.

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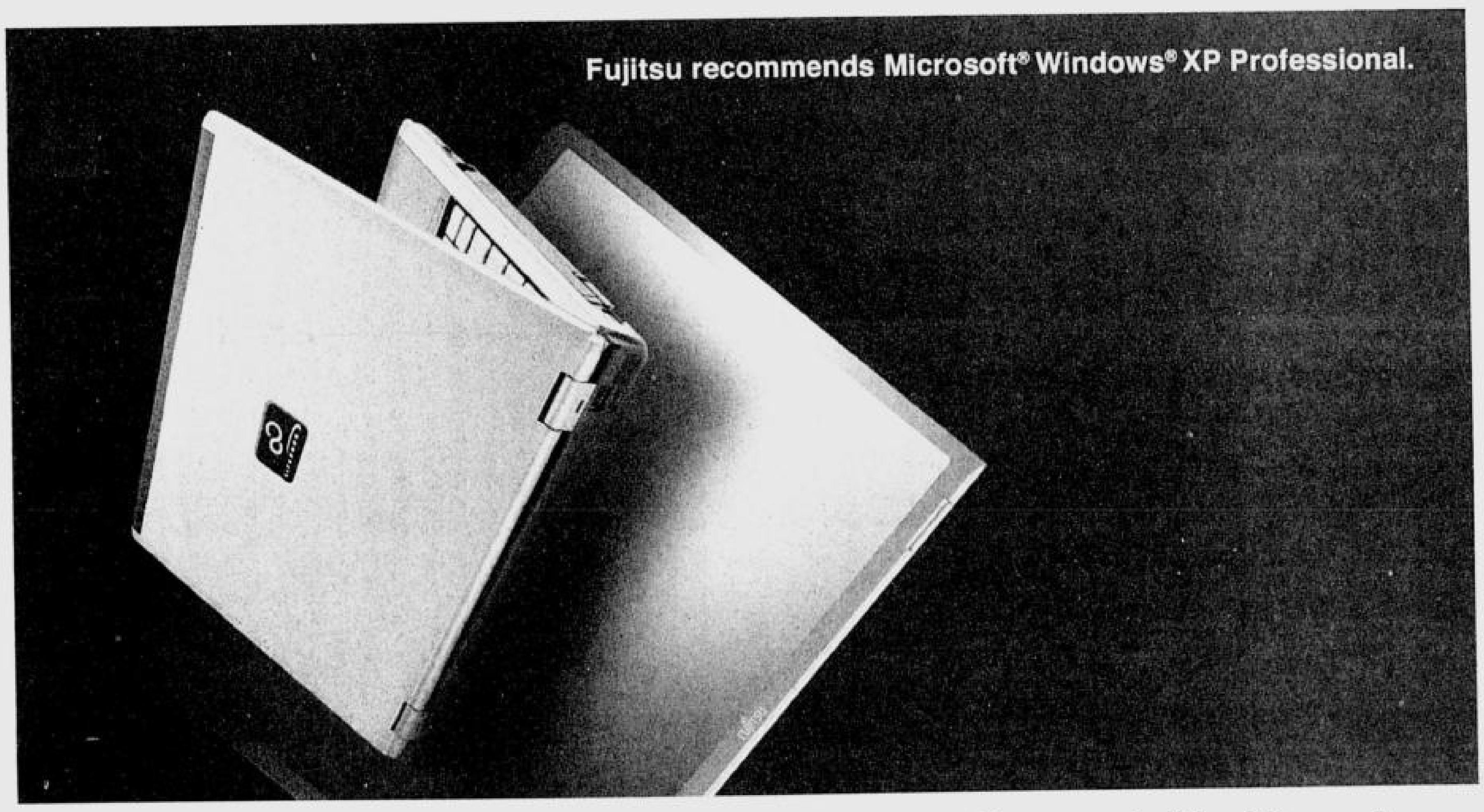

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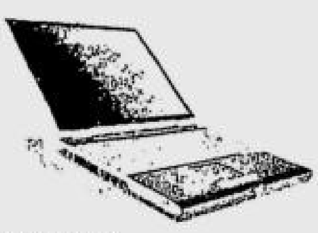

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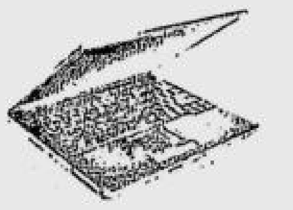

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Major telcos told to undergo 3rd party audit

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has directed the three major wireless phone companies to submit their networks to a third-party audit to address the issues of traffic congestion and network fitness.

Leading players Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. have indicated their willingness to shoulder the costs of the independent inspection on their networks, as well as that of Sun Cellular.

The NTC had asked the three players to recommend names of two independent and international inspectors. If there will be no consensus, the commission would choose the inspector through a lottery.

A telecom executive said the cost of the network check would range from P50,000 to P100,000.

"The cost of the inspection will be minimal because all the telcos have their own equipment. We will just be paying the inspector's man-hours and it shouldn't cost much," said the official.

Having the telcos submit their networks to a third-party check was first brought up by Smart's head of legal Rogelio Quevedo in response to accusations of Sun Cellular that Smart was blocking its calls and text messages.

An independent network audit is also hoped to address Smart's and Globe's allegation that Sun Cellular fell below the performance benchmarks set by the commission.

An NTC circular issued in 2002 required a maximum of 7 percent grade of service and a maximum of 5 percent drop calls. This means that no more than 7 out of 100 connection attempts should fail on the first try while no more than 5 out of 100 calls should be terminated by the network.

Competitors alleged that because of its 24/7 buffet pricing, Sun Cellular had congested its young network and is doing its customers a big disservice.

Based on the test conducted by Globe, 35.4 out of 100 Sun Cellular calls during a 14-hour average failed to connect, although on the drop call benchmark, 5.09 out of 100 calls were terminated by the Sun network.

Globe said that from 8 to 9 p.m., 87 out of 100 Sun Cellular calls did not connect successfully while drop calls rose to 14.29 out of 100 calls.

Smart's Pilipino Telephone Corp. earlier said the NTC should penalize Sun Cellular for cutting calls covered by its unlimited plan after 15 minutes and successfully connecting on the first attempt only 38 out of 100 calls.

Sun Cellular, the trade name of Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc., said the NTC should revisit its performance standard given the changes in the competition framework of the wireless industry.

SMDC Q1 earnings hit ₱81.4M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

REAL-ESTATE developer SM Development Corp. increased its earnings by 48.5 percent in the first quarter to P81.4 million from the P54.8 million it posted last year.

The increase in earnings was boosted by higher revenues from the sale of condominium units, SMDC said in a report to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

According to SMDC, total revenue rose 2.6 percent to P114.9 million. The company had already sold condominium units at its Chateau Elysees-Phase 1 project, which was 99-percent complete in the first quarter.

SMDC, through its subsidiary SM Synergy Properties Holdings Corp., launched the first phase of its project in Bicutan, Parañaque in 2003.

SM Synergy Properties is 85.5-percent owned by SMDC.

The Chateau Elysees, a six-storey residential condominium, is intended to cater to the middle income market. Phases 2 and 3 of the project will soon start construction, along with the clubhouse and road network.

SMDC is also set to start another middle-income residential project in Bago Bantay, Quezon City this year.

It is composed of four phases of 16-storey buildings. Plans are also being finalized to connect this to the SM North Edsa mall.

Fil-Estate posts net loss of ₱17M

HOLDING firm Fil-Estate Corp. said it incurred a net loss of P17.6 million in the first quarter due higher operating expenses.

Its net loss in the same quarter last year was P13.3 million.

Fil-Estate said it planned to continue its strategy of maintaining itself as a holding company with key investments in the MRT project. It said its operation for the next 12 months will be strictly confined to that of an investing company.

Depending on the progress of the MRT Consortium's discussions on phase 2 of the MRT Project, Fil-Estate Corp. may consider further investing or participating in the said project.

The Metro Rail Transit Corp., a consortium of companies leading the Metro Rail Transit project said last year it was optimistic it could finish building an extension of the MRT III project by 2006.

Phase 2 of the MRT 3 project covers a 5.1-kilometer transit system that will add three new stations from North Triangle station in Quezon City to Monumento. The three stations will cross Roosevelt, Balintawak and Monumento.

Once completed, ridership will increase to 1.3 million passengers a day from the current 400,000 a day.

Fil-Estate currently holds 29 percent in the MRT project, the 17-kilometer long light rail system along Edsa. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Share prices …

From page B1

Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.; power firms like First Philippine Holdings, Manila Electric Co. and Petron Corp.; and the stocks of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., Ayala Corp., Ionics Inc., JG Summit, and Lepanto Consolidated Mining.

Among the gainers were San Miguel Corp. B shares, Philippine National Bank, Aboitiz Equity Ventures and Holcim Philippines.

Early last week, the market was stronger, betting on news that the Senate was about to approve the VAT bill.

"The market has been looking forward to the passage of the VAT bill … [But] the bill still disappointed investors, as the rate has been retained at 10 percent, while some exemptions [were lifted]," BPI Trade said in its report. "The VAT bill will only partially raise the revenue to about P31 billion only … government will have to wait until 2006 before it can raise the much needed … P145 billion. The lifting of the VAT exemptions on power and fuel would also raise the selling price of these items."

The impact of the bill will be felt in phases. The first phase is the lifting of the VAT exemptions on July 1. The next round will be in 2006 when the President hikes the VAT rate to 12 percent. The VAT bill lifts the exemptions on certain items, such as power and fuel and raises the corporate income tax to 35 percent, which are all seen to have a negative impact on business, consumer consumption, and on government's programs to attract investments, according to BPI Trade.

Investors are now trying to assess the impact the expanded VAT and transport fare hike would have on the economy and consumers.

Investors are also waiting for news on the wage hike, "how much the hike will likely be," the brokerage house said.

. Dy has advised investors to focus on blue chips like PLDT, Ayala Land and SM Prime. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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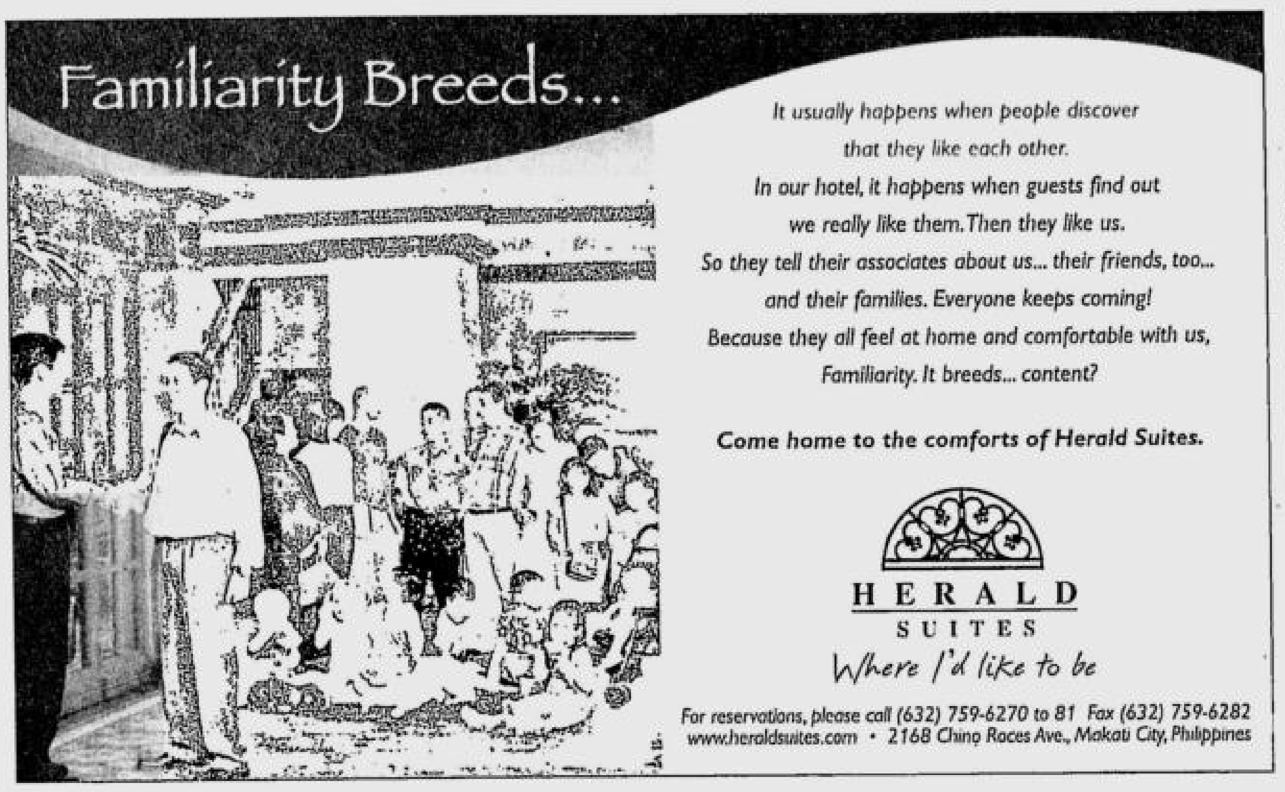
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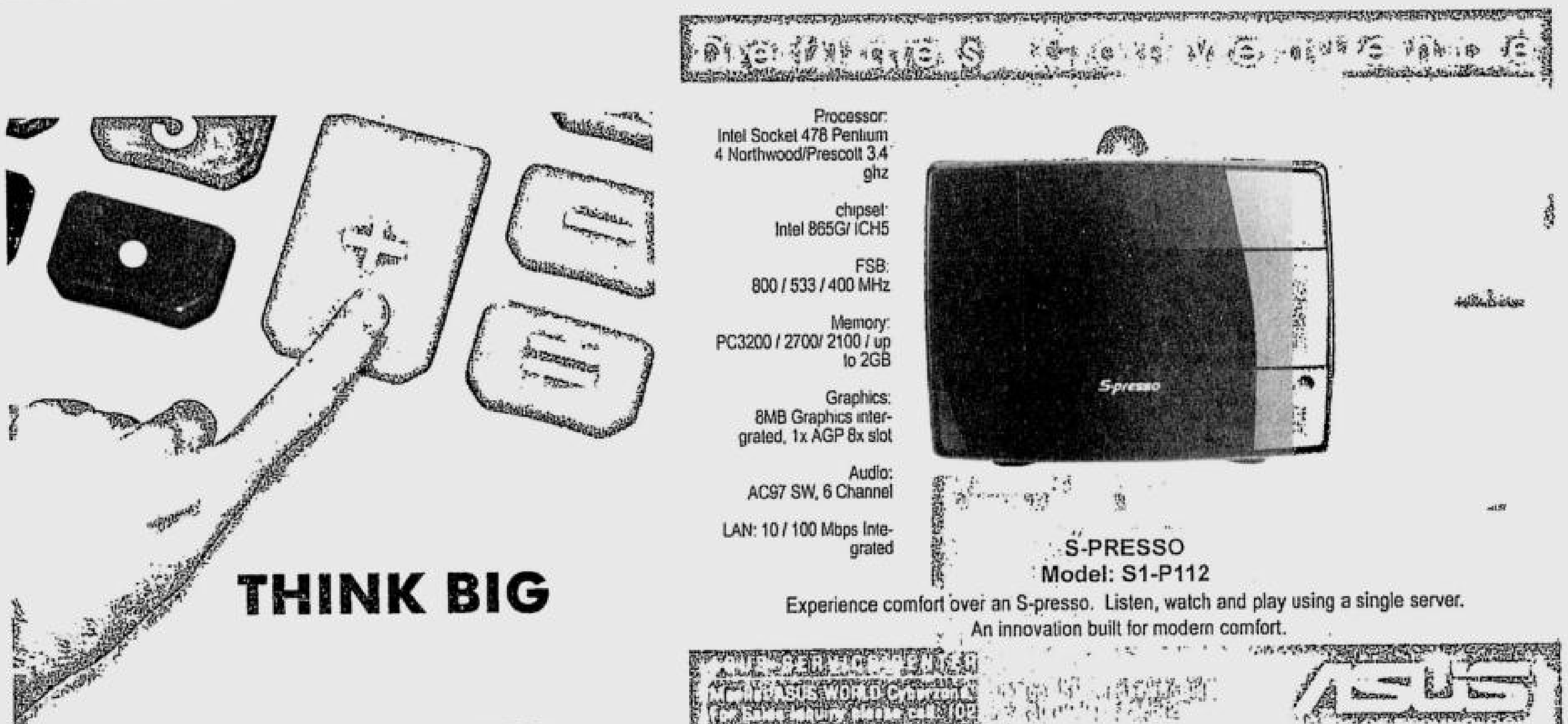
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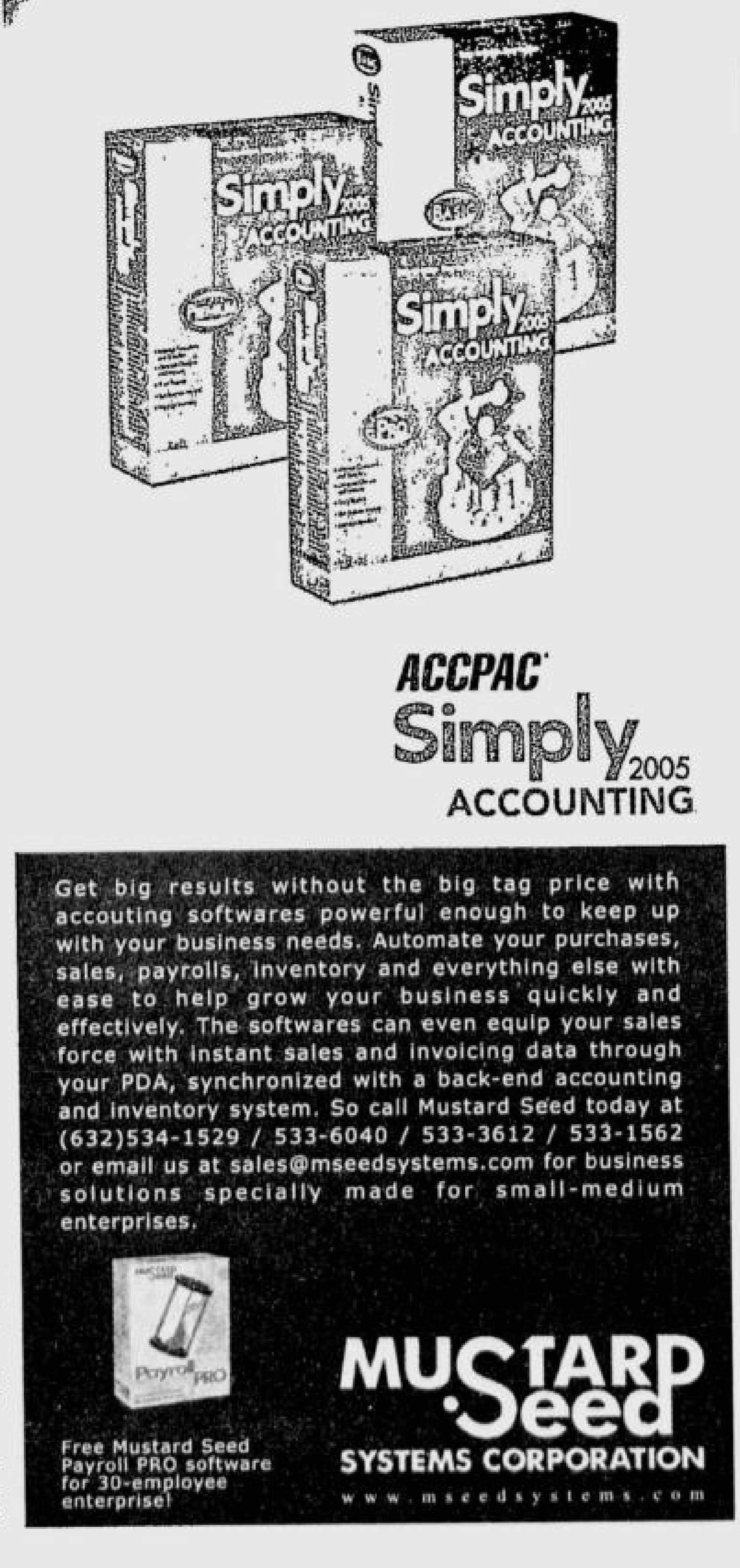
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First Gen gets SEC nod to raise ₱3B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has allowed the Lopez-led First Gen Corp. to issue P3 billion worth of fixed rate bonds to raise capital for possible investments.

First Gen is the holding company of the Lopez Group for its power and energy-related businesses.

First Gen earlier said it planned to issue the bonds by the second quarter.

First Gen has yet to identify possible acquisitions.

The company has tapped ING Bank N.V. as the sole bookrunner. ING Bank N.V. and BDO Capital and Investment Corp. are the joint lead managers that will handle the bond issue.

The Lopez Group controls some 1,725 megawatts of gross generation capacity.

The bond offer will come first before the company's planned initial public offer to raise roughly $200 to $300 million from the sale of new shares this year.

First Gen's subsidiaries include First Gas Power Corp. which runs a 1,000-MW power plant and FGP Corp., which controls a 500-MW facility.

Both natural gas-fired power plants are located in Batangas.

First Gen is 88.4 percent owned by First Philippine Holdings.

Asian Infrastructure Development Company (Aidec) FG Power Corp. Ltd., a $400-million investment fund, has a 7.75-percent stake in First Gen.

Sumitomo, one of the largest trading conglomerates in Japan, also has a 3.81-percent interest in the Lopez firm.

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BAGUIO CC ...Call Now	PUNTA FUEGO 550K	MLA POLO .. 2.15M
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CANLUBANG.. Call Now	RIVIERA SPORTS .. 45K	S'WOODS A 370K
CELEB SPORTS.. 150K	STA ELENA 'A' 1.3M	S'WOODS B 750K
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MLA GOLF ....Call Now	TAG MIDLANDS.... 680K	VALLEY GOLF.... 250K
MLA POLO CLUB 2.1[illegible]	TAG HILANDS 800K	WACK WACK [illegible]

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CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
Baguio Country Club	550K	
Canlubang Golf Club	500K	
Canyon Woods	125K	
Capitol Hills "A"	95K	
Celebrity Sports Club		100K
Club Filipino		90K
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	200K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	280K	
Eastridge Golf Club "A"	100K	
Makati Sports Club "A"	190K	
Manila Polo Club		2.150M
Manila Southwoods "A"	400K	
Metro Club "A"		90K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	170K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"		280K
Orchard Golf Club "C"		350K
Riviera Golf Club "B"		160K
Rockwell Club	280K	
Spa & Lodge	550K	
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.3M	
The Country Club at TH	400K	350K
Tagaytay Midlands		650K
Tower Club (Ind.)	300K	
Valley Golf Club		230K

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GG & A Club Shares
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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,100,000	1,000,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	1,050,000
Baguio Country Club	575,000	530,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	170,000	-
Canlubang	-	470,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	95,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	-
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	100,000
Club Filipino	150,000	100,000
Eagleridge "A"	200,000	180,000
Eagleridge "B"	290,000	-
Eagleridge "C"	300,000	-
Fairways "C3"	-	300,000
Forest Hills "A"	140,000	100,000
Forest Hills "B"	230,000	180,000
Forest Hills "C"	240,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	240,000	190,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	11,500,000	11,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	11,400,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,050,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	400,000	350,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	700,000
Manila Yacht Club	Please Call	300,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	100,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	300,000
Mt. Malarayal Gold "A"	220,000	180,000
Mt. Malarayal Gold "C"	300,000	180,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	150,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	450,000	350,000
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	500,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	-
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	170,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	100,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	-
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	-
Valley Golf	300,000	220,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,375,000	6,000,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,100,000	1,000,000
Alta Vista A/B*	250,000	-
Baguio Country Club	575,000	550,000
Calatagan Golf	40,000	
Camp John Hay	170,000	140,000
Canyon Woods	140,000	
Capital Hills	90,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	-
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	Pls Call	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	200,000/200,000*/Pls Call**	-
Eastridge A/B*	100,000	-
Evercrest	70,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/200,000*	-
Luisita Golf	310,000	-
Manila Golf Corporate	11,500,000	-
Manila Golf Individual	11,450,000	-
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,075,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	400,000	370,000/700,000*
Makati Sports Club	210,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	100,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	-	280,000*/300,000**
Mt. Malarayal A/C**	220,000	180,000/300,000**
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/320,000*	160,000/270,000*/350,000**
Puerto Azul	60,000	-
Punta Fuego	Pls Call	-
Quezon City Sports Club	140,000	120,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	130,000/150,000*	180,000**
Riviera Sports	45,000	
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/110,000*/160,000**	
Splendido	-	250,000
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,200,000/1,600,000*	1,100,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	-	670,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	
Valley Golf	270,000	
Valle Verde Ind	120,000	
Wack Wack Golf	[illegible]	6,300,000

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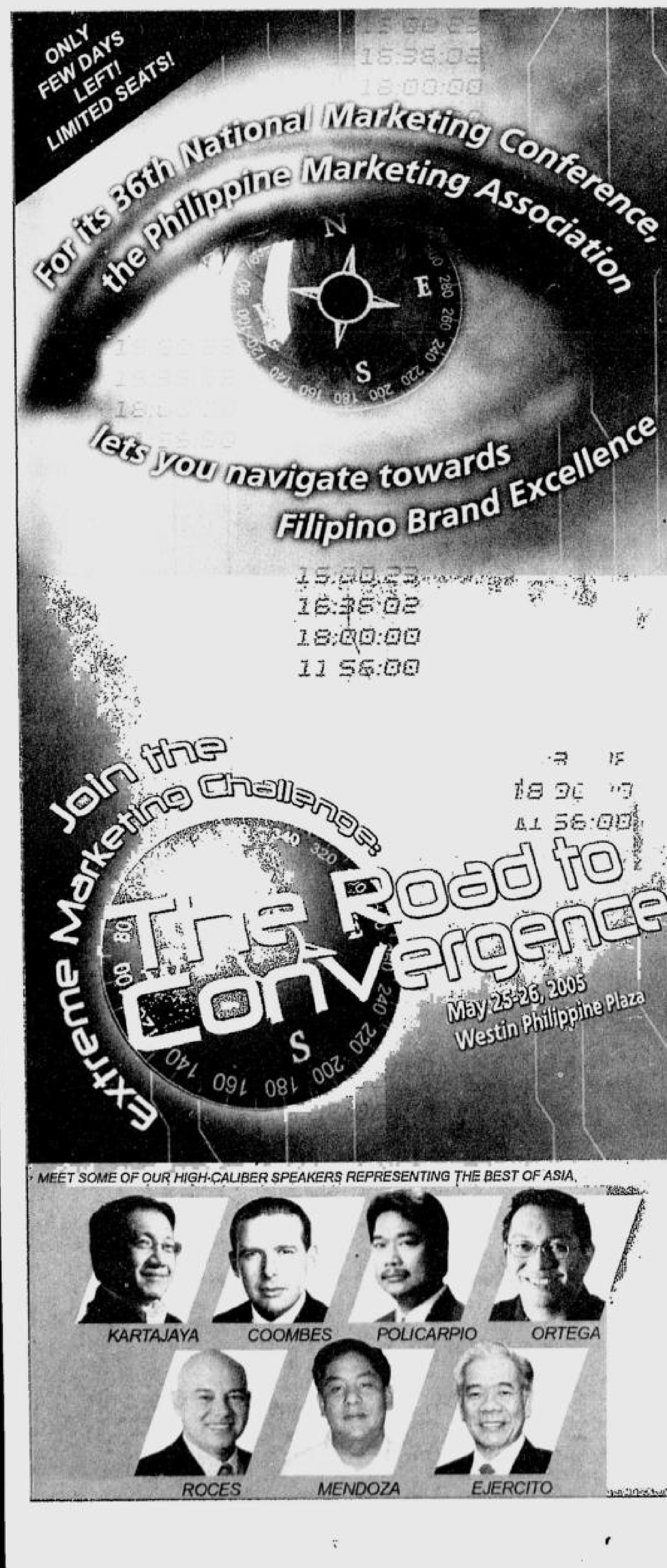
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(As of May 13, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28.5	29	28.5	28.5	349,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50	50	48.5	49	731,900
China Banking Corp.	790	790	790	790	10
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	2,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.64	0.65	0.64	0.65	900,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	47	47	47	23,600
International Exch. Bank	18	18	18	18	1,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	33	32	32	424,500
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	70
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	39,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	48,900
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	5,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	280	290	280	290	1,030
Manulife Financial Corp.	2400	2430	2400	2430	180
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	930,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	150	150	150	150	1,200
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1675	1675	1670	1675	400
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	12.75	13	107,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	3,591,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	825	825	815	815	68,980
Ipeople Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	26,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	1,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	75,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.2	3.3	942,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1400	1410	1400	1405	325,190
Ivantage Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.61	0.61	750,000
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.25	16.25	16	16	5,200
Manila Electric Co. B	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.75	947,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6	6	5.8	5.8	3,535,000
Petron Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.4	1,234,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	95,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	383,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	20,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	100,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	110,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	414,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	10,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	400
Jollibee Foods Corp	27.5	28	27.5	28	116,600
Swift Food Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	61,400
San Miguel Corp. B	85	85	84.5	85	11,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	3,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Alok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	2,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	16,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.2	7.3	7	7	3,701,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	300,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.75	4.8	1,777,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2	2	2	2	50,000
APC Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,430,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	67,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12	40,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	0.98	1	11,070,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	360,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	9,420,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.32	3,330,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.55	2.6	2.5	2.55	1,983,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	900,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8.1	8	8	370,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	48	46.5	47	307,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	250,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0875	0.0825	0.0875	2,200,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	16,000
Ionics Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	25,000
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	16,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	535,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.36	0.37	21,450,000
SM Investments Corp.	247	248	247	248	1,271,450
South China Resources Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.18	3,970,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.3	1.18	1.3	27,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	2,000,000
Pryce Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	500,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	340,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.16	3,742,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.42	1.42	1,467,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	3,000,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13.75	13.75	12.5	12.5	809,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.6	5,080,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	60,000
Cebu Holdings Inc	0.96	0.96	0.94	0.94	650,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	5,510,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.2	0.2	5,200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	3,870,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.56	1,512,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	20,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5	5	5	5	130,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.3	4,824,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	100,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	29,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.85	4.85	4.55	4.55	247,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.5	8.5	8	8	53,000
Benguet Corp. B	43	43	43	43	1,500
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	1,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.3	470,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	1,310,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	24,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	6,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.006	0.006	554,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.93	0.93	0.9	0.9	780,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,300,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	30	30	28	29.5	829,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	27,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	31,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	50,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	4,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.155	2,770,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc.	3,462,790	66,525,900.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	178,199,220	1,000,236,145.00
PRO	26,966,000	81,859,470.00
Mining	618,691,500	32,960,340.00
OIL	62,924,000	813,100.00
GRAND TOTALS:	890,243,510	1,182,394,955.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc.	553.50	DOWN 11.56
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,968.54	DOWN 34.25
PRO	701.14	DOWN 17.79
Mining	2,636.61	DOWN 91.62
OIL	2.37	DOWN 0.08
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,154.69	DOWN 13.74
Composite	1,882.39	DOWN 29.36

NO. OF ADVANCES: 9; NO. OF DECLINES: 61; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 48; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 118; NO. OF TRADES: 2,287

CURRENCIES

May 13, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.787216	1.000000	54.2180
Japan	Yen	0.007375	0.009369	0.5080
United Kingdom	Pound	1.469181	1.866300	101.1871
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100945	0.128231	6.9524
Switzerland	Franc	0.647967	0.823113	44.6275
Canada	Dollar	0.628967	0.798977	43.3189
Singapore	Dollar	0.475860	0.604485	32.7740
Australia	Dollar	0.603461	0.766577	41.5623
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.088216	2.652661	143.8220
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.209919	0.266660	14.4578
Brunei	Dollar	0.474427	0.602664	32.6752
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000106	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019942	0.025332	1.3735
UAE	Dirham	0.214337	0.272272	14.7620
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.270300	68.8731
Argentina	Peso	0.271922	0.345423	18.7281
Brazil	Real	0.319876	0.406339	22.0309
Denmark	Kroner	0.134404	0.170733	9.2568
India	Rupee	0.018181	0.023095	1.2522
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207190	0.263193	14.2698
Mexico	New Peso	0.071559	0.090902	4.9285
New Zealand	Dollar	0.565854	0.718804	38.9721
Norway	Kroner	0.123570	0.156971	8.5107
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013231	0.016807	0.9112
South Africa	Rand	0.125854	0.159872	8.6679
Korea	Won	0.000788	0.001001	0.0543
Sweden	Kroner	0.108438	0.137749	7.4685
Syria	Pound	0.015165	0.019264	1.0445
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025147	0.031944	1.7319
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000367	0.000466	0.0253

Increase OFW investments in trust funds, banks urged

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has encouraged banks to tap overseas Filipino workers as a market for unit investment trust funds (UITFs), a new product promoted by the banking regulator to replace common trust funds.

BSP Officer in Charge Amando Tetangco Jr. said: "We would like to encourage the creativity of the banks to provide avenues for smaller investments."

The BSP has ordered the phaseout of CTFs and the introduction of the UITFs, which it believed would be a better product as it better reflects market value.

The UITFs would be handled separately by the trust departments of banks.

Under the new rules, UITFs can only be invested in assets that are either easily convertible to cash or readily traded.

As such, funds pooled into UITFs could not be used by the banks for relending to other customers, but could be placed in equities, bonds and high-grade commercial papers, which are traded in the market.

Tetangco said he wanted banks to go after OFWs to help them put their remittances into good use.

These can also be used for direct investment into small businesses, like micro-enterprises.

"This would complement the thrust of the BSP to encourage micro-financing," he said.

The BSP was also working to ensure that more dollar remittances pass through formal channels, such as banks.

"Previous studies have shown that more than $2 billion a year in OFW remittances still do not go through banks and other formal channels due to the inaccessibility of these traditional conduits," Tetangco said.

Remittances from migrant Filipinos rose by 16.6 percent in the first quarter to $2.3 billion from a year ago.

The Philippines has been relying on huge remittances from OFWs to boost domestic consumer demand.

In 2004, OFW inflows pumped in a record-high of $8.5 billion to the economy.

The International Monetary Fund, for its part, has urged developing countries that enjoy huge migrant remittances like the Philippines to reduce transaction costs and maximize the benefit of the flow of funds.

The IMF study said transaction costs in the Philippines, despite being the third biggest recipient of migrant remittances next to Mexico and India, averaged at about 13.5 percent, were among the highest.

The Philippines ranked next to Bangladesh (16 percent), Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 percent) and Morroco (14 percent).

PLDT, Smart extend price promo

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has again extended to June 11 its unlimited P10 promo for calls within the network and to its cellular phone subsidiaries Smart Communications and Pilipino Telephone Corp.

The 30-day extension from May 11 was in response to the clamor of PLDT's more than 23 million fixed-line and mobile subscribers to extend the offering, according to Butch Jimenez, PLDT head of retail.

Jimenez said PLDT's call volume had gone up 200 percent since the promo started.

PLDT was extending the promo even after it reported that fixed-line revenue weakened in the first quarter.

The P10 promo is also being attacked by competitors.

Globe Telecom Inc. had asked the National Telecommunications Commission to stop PLDT from offering the P10 promo unless the telecom giant would allow its competitors to join.

Smart, meanwhile, said it was likely to also extend its 258 promo scheduled to May 21.

PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno had said that the current promo tariffs were under review, hinting that the telecom giant could fold-in the low pricing to its current rate structure.

"We are looking at a model where the unlimited would fit into our pricing scheme. But for now, they would remain as promos," Nazareno said during PLDT's briefing of its first quarter results.

Globe president Gerardo Ablaza, however, said that for his company, unlimited pricing was not the way to go.

"Our experience indicates that consumer behavior leads to massive change in call volume that would become unsustainable if we were to meet the minimum requirement on network integrity," said the Globe president.

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Manufacturing investments up 134%

From page B1

erate a total of 18,194 direct jobs once the projects are fully operational.

"The upbeat investments in the manufacturing sector supports the country's thrust of developing a strong manufacturing industry that not only creates jobs but also facilitates the transfer of technology to the country," Santos said.

About 61 percent of investments in the manufacturing sector are related to chemicals and chemical products; 12 percent to radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus; 7 percent each to motor vehicles, office equipment and accounting and computing machinery; and 18 percent to a range of other products.

The trade chief also said that the first quarter numbers indicate that the country continues to be an attractive investment destination for manufacturing and services operations.

Also, the information technology services sector this year continues to get sizable investments with a total P903 million, involving 15 projects, that are expected to employ 4,825 workers.

Local investors have put in more investments in the first quarter, with commitments of P34.51 billion. Foreign investors account for P31.1 billion worth of projects.

Santos said that among the foreign sources of investments, Japan was at the top with P14.18 billion, followed by South Korea with P9.57 billion, and The Netherlands with P3.01 billion.

US firm quits China to set up shop in RP

From page B1

farmers favor engines made of cast iron because it is not sensitive to corrosion caused by the elements such as water and soil. Cast iron engines are also less expensive than competing engines made of aluminum.

The trade chief said B&S decided to move its operations from Chongqing in China because the firm expected increasing costs there would drive up the price of its products.

Santos explained that the B&S unit in Chongqing was under a joint venture between B&S USA and the Chinese government, which provided the manufacturing site.

He added that due to financial difficulties, the Chinese government gave up its share of the company and forced B&S Chongqing to rent a new plant site, which increased production costs.

However, B&S USA still considers the China plant as a better site for the manufacture of its new aluminum engines.

AMMPI has also invested P35 million in the joint venture.

Over the next five years, AMMPI's production of engines would be for exclusive export to B&S Shanghai which, in turn, would supply the required volume for the Philippine market through AMP. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

NGO urges BCDA to reject John Hay consortium offer

From page B4

promptly settle the arrears since some P300 million of Baguio City money is locked up in that debt."

Baguio City had earmarked its share from the John Hay lease-contract for the rehabilitation of its waterworks and the eradication of the meningococcemia plague.

Victoria said the BCDA "must remember that it did not have exclusive interest over the huge debt of the John Hay developer." She pointed out that Northern Luzon was a direct beneficiary of several infrastructure projects that were supposed to be funded by the proceeds of the John Hay project."

BCDA officials should also keep in mind that they could face plunder raps if they succumb to pressures from the developer to enter into a deal, Victoria warned. A possible P1 billion loss to the government arising from the settlement with CJHDevco is over and above the P50 million threshold for a plunder case, she added.

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Auspril ready to proceed with ₱7.8-B road project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FILIPINO-AUSTRALIAN firm Ausphil Tollways Corp. is ready to proceed with the P7.8-billion initial stage of the North Luzon East Expressway as soon as it gets the approval from the National Economic and Development Authority.

Ausphil president Ricardo Penson said in a statement that the project involved an 18.9-kilometer stretch between Commonwealth Avenue, near the La Mesa watershed through San Jose del Monte City, to Norzagaray in Bulacan.

Penson said the Ausphil group was composed of Brisbane-based Aspen International Pty. Ltd. as lead proponent, Baseline Consulting Pty. Ltd. of West End as engineering auditors and Stuff Queensland Pty. Ltd. as equity investor.

Ausphil's Philippine group is headed by Penson's DRI Group, Informatics and Integrated PhilConsult.

Penson said a $A3.6-million (about P144 million) toll collection system, which is standard in other toll roads in the Philippines, would be supplied by Queensland Motorways.

He said that Stage 2 would connect Stage 1 with National Road 5 to serve the Cagayan Valley motorist load.

Earlier pronouncements from the Department of Trade and Industry, to which the National Development Co. and its unit Philippine Infrastructure Corp. are attached, said the NLEE was supposed to run parallel to the existing North Luzon Expressway and would open up the countryside east of Metro Manila to the Cagayan Valley.

Last year, Malacañang drew up a priority infrastructure program that includes the NLEE, which is expected to carry 69,000 vehicles daily starting mid-2007.

Penson described NLEE as a "water-sensitive urban toll road project," which would be Australia's biggest venture in the Philippines.

He said conceptual studies for the project started in 1998, which "evolved into a design for constructed roadways and wetlands for traffic and rainwater management."

Aside from that, the development would produce 12.5 million cubic meters of raw water yearly through a catchment and filtration process for the La Mesa reservoir.

Bidding for Palinpinon contract hits snag

By Abigail L. Ho

DUMAGUETE CITY, Negros Oriental—The bidding for the Palinpinon 2 optimization program of the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp.'s (PNOC-EDC) Palinpinon 2 has been delayed anew due to stricter bidding rules.

The new rules require bidders to submit tax clearances from the Bureau of Internal Revenue together with their bids.

PNOC-EDC's Palinpinon 2 optimization project aims to maximize the use of excess steam from the state firm's 80-megawatt (MW) geothermal facility in Negros Oriental.

Based on the available steam, the winning bidder could harness between 20 MW and 25 MW of capacity from the geothermal steam field.

PNOC-EDC president Paul Aquino said in an interview Friday that, after being delayed for more than two years, the bidding for the contract was again delayed because of Executive Order 398.

Under the order, which was signed last Jan. 12, firms interested in bidding for government projects would have to submit their annual income tax return, value-added tax or percentage tax returns covering the previous six months and tax clearance issued by the BIR's collection enforcement division.

"When we publicized [the bidding], the implementing rules and regulations of the EO had not yet come out. But because of the EO, the interested bidders asked for a postponement so they can get their tax clearance," Aquino told reporters.

The deadline for the submission of eligibility documents, together with some BIR documents, had been scheduled for May 23.

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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 02
Series of 2005

SUBJECT: RULES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE ACQUISITION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS SUBJECT OF VOLUNTARY OFFER TO SELL AND COMPULSORY ACQUISITION AND THOSE COVERED UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 407

I. PREFATORY STATEMENT

The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988 covers all agricultural lands regardless of tenurial arrangement and commodity produced.

In view of continuing and evolving concerns in the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), this Administrative Order (AO) is hereby issued to simplify the processes in land acquisition pursuant to Republic Act No. 6657 and other related laws.

II. COVERAGE

These rules and procedures shall cover Voluntary Offer to Sell (VOS) and Compulsory Acquisition (CA) of agricultural lands enumerated under Section 7 of R.A. No. 6657 and those acquired under E.O. No. 407 dated June 14, 1990, as amended.

III. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

1. Landowners (LOs) may voluntarily offer their private agricultural lands for coverage under R.A. No. 6657. However, in the event that the landowner (LO) offers his/her property to the government after the Notice of Coverage (NOC) was received by him/her, the same may be allowed provided that the claim folder (CF) for the subject landholding is not yet received by the Claims Processing, Valuation and Payment Division (CPVPD) of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) for valuation.
2. Applications for VOS involving retained areas or those landholdings with an aggregate area of five (5) hectares and below per landowner shall not be accepted.
3. The compensation for the land shall be: a) the amount agreed upon by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), now Department of Land Reform (DLR), LBP, and the LO in accordance with the criteria provided for in Section 17 and 18, and other pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 6657 and existing guidelines; or b) the value based on the order of DAR Adjudication Board (DARAB); or c) the amount as ordered by the regular court which has become final and executory.
4. In cases of rejection, LOs may withdraw the original value of the landholding as determined by the DLR and LBP per Memorandum of Valuation (MOV) and subsequently deposited in their names, subject to their submission of the requirements for payment.

   When the LO later accepts the original value or as recomputed by the LBP based on existing valuation guidelines, mere filing of a manifestation by the LO as regards the acceptance of the original value or a joint manifestation by the LO and the LBP on the recomputed value with the DARAB shall automatically terminate the just compensation case pending thereat.
5. Landowners, other than banks and financial institutions, who voluntarily offer their lands for sale, shall be entitled to an additional five percent (5%) cash payment pursuant to Section 19 of R.A. No. 6657.
6. For tenanted lands, the Agrarian Reform Beneficiary/ies (ARBs) shall continue to pay lease rentals based on existing guidelines on leasehold operations until such time that the LBP issues Certification of Deposit (COD).
7. Landholdings which were issued patents under the "Handog Titulo" program of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) after June 15, 1988 shall not be subject of acquisition and distribution by the DLR unless Section 6 of R.A. No. 6657 applies. However, if the LO has landholdings other than those issued under the "Handog Titulo" program, said other landholdings shall be covered under CARP unless the aggregate landholding does not exceed five (5) hectares.
8. Lands proclaimed as settlement areas and awarded to settlers or beneficiaries under the resettlement program earlier implemented by the DLR and its predecessor offices shall not be subject to acquisition and redistribution under the CARP.

IV. OPERATING PROCEDURES

Landholdings subject of acquisition shall be validated based on ownership documents and on the projection by the DLR on DENR land classification maps to determine whether or not the areas are alienable and disposable.

The DLR shall prepare the preliminary information on all of the landholdings that shall be subject of joint field investigation using CARP-LA Form No. 1 which shall form part of the documentation of the claim folder.

The conduct of segregation/subdivision survey shall be considered an independent activity. However, the Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer (PARO) shall ensure that all field survey activities shall be completed before or undertaken simultaneously with the conduct of Field Investigation (FI).

LAND ACQUISITION PROCESS

STEPS	AGENCY/ PERSONS Responsible	ACTIVITY	FORMS/DOCUMENTS (REQUIREMENTS)
A. IDENTIFICATION AND DOCUMENTATION			
FOR VOS			
1.a	Registered owner for titled properties LO for untitled properties	• Files notarized letter offer together with basic ownership documents in any DLR office	For titled properties: • Notarized LOs Letter-Offer (CARP Form No 2) • certified copy of the original OCT/ TCT on file with ROD and Photocopy of ODC, if available • copy of latest Tax Declaration in the name of the registered owner duly certified by the Municipal/City Assessor • copy of Approved Survey Plan or Sketch Plan of the Property certified by a licensed GE For untitled properties: • Notarized LOs Letter-Offer (CARP-LA Form No 2) and the eight (8) requirements enumerated under Annex "A"
1.b	DLRMO/ DLRPO/ DLRRO/ DLRCO-BLAD	• Receives duly accomplished Letter-Offer (CARP-LA Form No 2) and determines completeness of basic documents cited under Step No 1.a and requires other applicable documents under different situations The DLR office which received the aforesaid documents shall forward same to DLR Provincial Office where the subject property is located	• Same as the forms and documents required under step No. 1.a above • Refer to Annex "A" for the list of documents required under different situations
2	DLRPO	• Accepts offer including supporting documents and instructs the MARO to prepare the CF and to post the letter-offer and acceptance letter for seven (7) days at the Barangay and Municipal/City Halls where the property is located and, thereafter, issues Certification of Posting Compliance If LO fails to submit Statement of Production and Income or the applicable Audited Financial Statements within thirty (30) days from receipt of the Acceptance Letter, MARO issues certification on LOs' failure	• CARP-LA Form No. 3 (Acceptance Letter) • CARP-LA Form No 4 (VOSCF Documentation Memo) • CARP-LA Form No 5 (Certification of Posting Compliance) CARP-LA Form No 6 (Certification on LO's failure to submit Statement of Production and Income)
FOR CA			
1	DLRMO	• Gathers basic ownership documents and prepares corresponding claim folder per landholding as listed in CARP-LA Form No 1	Same as the forms and documents required under Step No. 1.a except for Letter Offer • CARP-LA Form No 1 (Preliminary Information on landholdings scheduled for FI)
FOR EO 407			
1	LO (GFIs, GOCCs)	• Executes DOT in favor of RP and surrenders to DLR basic ownership documents The DLR office which received the aforesaid documents shall forward same to DLR Provincial Office where the subject property is located	• certified copy of the original OCT/ TCT on file with ROD and Photocopy of ODC, if available • copy of latest Tax Declaration in the name of the registered owner duly certified by the Municipal/City Assessor's • copy of Approved Survey Plan or Sketch Plan of the Property certified by a licensed GE • Refer to Annex "A" for the list of documents required under different situations
FOR CA			
2	DLRPO	• Sends LO Notice of Coverage and instructs the MARO to post the NOC for seven (7) days at the barangay/ municipal/city halls where the property is located and thereafter issues Certification of Posting Compliance If LO fails to submit Statement of Production and Income or the applicable Audited Financial Statements within thirty (30) days from receipt of the NOC, MARO issues certification on LOs failure	• CARP-LA Form No. 7 (Notice of Coverage) • CARP-LA Form No. 5 (Certification of Posting Compliance) • CARP-LA Form No 8 (CACF Documentation Memo) • Proof of Service of NOC per pertinent guidelines • CARP-LA Form No. 6 (Certification on LO's failure to submit Statement of Production and Income)
FOR VOS, CA, EO 407			
3	DLRMO	• Sends Notice to BARC, LBP, and potential ARBs and invites the LO and DENR, LGU-MAO (if necessary) on schedule of Field Investigation (FI) at least fifteen (15) days in advance	• CARP-LA Form No. 9 (Notice to Conduct Field Investigation) • CARP-LA Form No. 10 (Invitation Letter to the LO)
4	DLRMO, BARC, LBP LO, POTENTIAL ARBs	• Conducts FI of property with representatives of LBP, BARC, LO, potential ARBs and surveyor (if survey field work is simultaneous) and with the assistance of the DENR and/or LGU-MAO, if necessary	• Copy of approved segregation/ subdivision plan or if not available, advance copy of segregation/subdivision plan (with reference plan)
5	DLRMO LBP BARC	• Prepares FI Report and Land Use Map	• CARP-LA Form No 11 (Field Investigation Report)
6	DLRMO	• Proceeds with the preliminary screening of potential ARBs and the MARO issues Certification of Qualified Potential ARBs	• CARP-LA Form No. 12 (Certification of Qualified Potential ARBs)
7	DLRMO	• Forwards CF to DLRPO together with approved subdivision / segregation plan. However, if the whole property is covered, boundary or perimeter sketch plan duly certified by a GE will suffice	• CARP-LA Form No. 13 (CF transmittal Memo) • ASP with Technical Description • Perimeter Land Use Map
B. REVIEW AND COMPLETION OF DATA/DOCUMENTS			
8	DLRPO DLRPO, GFIs GOCCs, ROD DLR-LBP-PPU	• Receives CF Note For EO 407 lands, after determination of the acquirable area, completes the execution of the DOT and forwards the same together with the ASP to the ROD for registration and issuance of title in the name of RP. Thereafter, commences the immediate distribution of the property even pending valuation of the same • Evaluates, determines sufficiency and processability of CF, and recommends submission to LBP-AOC	• DOT between GFIs/GOCCs and DLR • CARP-LA Form No 14 (Checklist of required documents with recommendation signed jointly by the DLR-LBP PPU)
9	DLRPO	• Prepares Memorandum Request to value and forwards CF to LBP-AOC together with checklist of required documents duly reviewed and recommended by the DLR-LBP-PPU	• CARP-LA Form No 15 (Memorandum Request to Value Land with CARP-L Form No 14 - Checklist of required documents jointly signed by DLR-LBP PPU)
C. LAND VALUATION AND COMPENSATION			
10	LBP-AOC	• Receives and acknowledges receipt of CF • Reviews CF and determines land value	• CARP-LA Form No 15 (LBP Acknowledgment)
11	LBP-AOC/HO	• Sends Memorandum of Valuation with Land Valuation Worksheet (LVW) to DLRPO	• CARP-LA Form No.16 (Memo of Valuation) • Land Valuation Worksheet
12	DLRPO	• Receives and reviews Memorandum of Valuation with LVW from LBP • Sends • Order to deposit to LBP, together with a copy of Application to Purchase and Farmer's Undertaking (APFU) • Notice of Land Valuation and Acquisition (NLVA) to LO together with copies of MOV, LVW and LO's Reply Form and causes the posting of the NLVA for seven (7) days at the barangay and municipal/city halls where the property is located and, thereafter, issues Certification of Posting Compliance	• CARP-LA Form No. 17 (Order to Deposit) • CARP-LA Form No 20 (duplicate copy of NLVA) • CARP-LA Form No 18 (Revised APFU) • CARP-LA Form No 20 (Notice of Land Valuation and Acquisition with CARP-LA Form No 21-LOs' Reply Form) • CARP-LA Form No. 16 (Memo of Valuation) with • Land Valuation Worksheet • CARP-LA Form No 5 (Certification of Posting Compliance of NLVA by the PARO)
13	LBP	• Issues Certification of Deposit to DLR	• CARP-LA FORM No. 19 (Certification of Deposit)
14	LO	• Replies to NLVA within thirty (30) days from receipt and submits documents to LBP required for payment of compensation claim	• CARP-LA Form No 21 (LOs' Reply)
15	DLRPO	• Sends LOs reply to LBP	• CARP-LA Form No 22 (DLRPO transmittal letter of LOs' Reply) • CARP-LA Form No. 21 (LOs Reply)
C.1 WHERE LO ACCEPTS THE LAND VALUATION			
16	DLRPO	• Forwards to ROD copy of Certification of Deposit, together with ASP, and requests issuance of Transfer Certificate of Title in the name of RP	• CARP Form No. 23 (Request to Issue TCT in the name of RP)
17	ROD	• Issues TCT in the name of RP and forwards Owner's Duplicate Certificate of RP Title to DLRPO which shall furnish LBP-AOC certified photo copy of the same	• TCT Judicial Form (LRA) • CARP-LA Form No 24 (Transmittal to LBP of certified photo copy of RP title)
18	LBP-AOC LBP-HO	• Prepares Payment Release Form. Pays LO and mortgagee-banks/creditors, if encumbered	• LBP Payment Release Form
C.2 WHERE LO REJECTS LAND VALUATION OR FAILS TO RESPOND			
16	DLRPO	• If the LO rejects the offered price or fails to reply within thirty (30) days from receipt of the NLVA, forwards to ROD copy of the Certification of Deposit, ASP with Technical Description and letter-request to ROD for the issuance of RP title • Advises the RARAD/PARAD to conduct summary administrative proceedings	• CARP Form No. 21 (LOs' reply to NLVA) • CARP-LA Form No. 19 (Certification of Deposit) • CARP-LA Form No 23 (Request to issue TCT in the name of RP) • CARP-LA Form No. 25 (Advice to PARAD/RARAD)
17	ROD	• Issues TCT in the name of RP and forwards Owner's Duplicate Certificate of RP Title to DLRPO which shall furnish LBP-AOC certified photo copy of the same	• New TCT in the name of RP • CARP-LA Form No 24 (Transmittal to LBP of certified photo copy of RP title)
18	RARAD/ PARAD	• Simultaneous with Step Nos. 16-17 above, conducts summary administrative proceedings, renders decision and informs parties concerned of the same • In case the LO or LBP/DLR rejects the DARAB decision, the LO or LBP/DLR may go to SAC/CA/SC for final determination of just compensation	
19	DLRPO	• Requests DARAB/Proper Courts to issue Certificate of Finality, except in cases covered by Sec III 4 par 2 of this AO, and forwards to LBP the original copy. Thereafter, LBP follows Step No. 18 of C.1.	
D. LAND DISTRIBUTION			

DLRPO provides the DLRMO certified copy of the RP Title with the instruction to immediately take possession of the land and proceed with the redistribution of the same in favor of the qualified beneficiaries. In case there is any standing crop on the land at the time of acquisition, the landowner shall retain his share of the harvest thereof pursuant to Section 28 of R.A. No 6657 and other related laws.

In consideration of the payment made by the LBP, the original Owner's Duplicate Copy of CLOA-Titles shall be surrendered to LBP as mortgagee.

V. TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

This Administrative Order shall apply even to claims pending at any level but only in so far as the subsequent or remaining procedures/activities are concerned.

However, CFs involving landholdings with an aggregate area of five (5) hectares and below per landowner or those covered by patents under the "Handog Titulo" program of the DENR shall no longer be processed except those already officially received by the LBP.

VI. EFFECTIVITY

This Order shall take effect ten (10) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation pursuant to Section 49 of R.A. No 6657. It shall repeal Administrative Order No 2 (1996), A.O. No 1 (1998), A.O. No. 4 (2000) and amend A.O. No 1 (2003), AO No 2 (2003), A.O. No. 7 (2003), and other pertinent guidelines or portions thereof inconsistent herewith.

Quezon City, Metro Manila 12 May 2005

RENE C. VILLA
Secretary

(PDI - May 16, 2005)

BPI sees good year for consumer lending

By Doris C. Dumlao

BPI FAMILY Savings Bank, the country's biggest thrift bank, sees a better year ahead for local consumer banks despite tougher competition from foreign banks.

BPI Family, a unit of the country's second biggest lender, Bank of the Philippine Islands, expects to chalk up a 10-15 percent increase in net profit this year, over about P1 billion posted in 2004, on the back of robust consumer lending.

Bank president Alfonso Salcedo Jr. told reporters during the launching of its "Get Started on Tomorrow" campaign that the thrift bank—which pumped in 15 percent of BPI's P6.7 billion net profit last year—was unfazed by entry of more foreign players into consumer banking.

He said consumer banking was really a robust area of growth and that it was no surprise that even the likes of HSBC and even Citibank now wanted to have a slice of the pie.

During the first four months of the year, he said BPI Family's new housing loans were up by 25 percent and auto loans, by 10 percent, over a year ago.

Salcedo said this pace of growth would likely be sustained for the rest of the year.

The bank also expects its deposit base to expand by 15 percent this year, especially with the launch of the "Plan Ahead" time deposit, which was a high-earning five-year time deposit for a minimum placement of P50,000.

A five-year time deposit of P300,000, for instance, is expected to yield a compounded interest rate of 9.2 percent.

The proceeds could be used for the children's educational needs, a much-awaited trip abroad or an opportunity to start up a small enterprise, he said.

BPI Family Bank's new campaign also features two core lending products—"Drive Your Dream Auto Loan" and "Build Your Dream Housing Loan."

The new car loan program promises prompt loan approval and low interest rates, while the housing program offers fixed interest up to 12 years, to allow customers to carefully plan their finances.

"Because of the rising cost of living, even dreaming has become a luxury for many Filipinos. This should not be the case," Salcedo said.

"With BPI Family Savings Bank, they can start on their future today because we give friendly loan terms, high-yield financial plans and fair rates. Our services are even enhanced as bank officials provide personal advice to clients to make it easy for them to get moving towards their dreams," he said.

He said the bank management was positioning BPI as a "catalyst for a culture of optimism" in the Philippines.

In the case of auto loans, Salcedo said growth in sales had been hampered by the lack of supply due to the surge in demand for new car models.

But he said car manufacturers and dealers were now addressing this supply bottleneck.

"The [car] industry wants to grow by at least 10 percent and one of the things they're addressing is lack of supply. They have all of these new models and they have forecasts, but these were based on depressed demand in the last three to four years," Salcedo said.

Judge seeks more time to study Maynilad plan

By Christine A. Gaylican

QUEZON City Regional Trial Court Judge Reynaldo Daway has asked the Supreme Court for more time to evaluate the latest rehabilitation plan of debt-ridden water distributor, Maynilad Water Services Inc.

The latest plan contains provisions on a new debt structure and a capital restructuring agreement with creditors.

Judge Daway has asked for at least 15 days before he could approve the interim guidelines for Maynilad's rehabilitation, according to designated court receiver Rosario Bernaldo.

The guidelines were supposed to have been issued last week but Judge Daway said he wanted more time to study the provisions of Maynilad's revised rehabilitation plan, Bernaldo told the INQUIRER.

She also cited that certain conditions in the plan have not been met, including the written approval from the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as majority of Maynilad's creditors were foreign banks.

Opposition groups of Maynilad's latest revised rehabilitation plan, on the other hand, have asked the BSP not to give its approval, saying that the agreement was contrary to law and public policy.

Lawyers of Akbayan Party-List Group, Action for Economic Reforms and other petitioners indicated in its letter to the BSP on May 10 that "the debt and capital restructuring agreement bails out Benpres Holdings Inc. and the creditor banks using public funds, and under terms grossly disadvantageous to the state-led Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS)."

The law firm of Quevedo, Malaluan and Lumba stated that Benpres Holdings, who should be the guarantor of a major portion of Maynilad debts to foreign and local banks, amounting to about US$144 million are no longer obligated to do so.

Instead, under the said rehabilitation plan, such Maynilad debts will be converted into a new credit facility owed by the reorganized Maynilad. Of this facility, US$32 million shall be paid up-front to the creditor banks, and the rest (US$112 million) shall be restructured with final maturity dates of by Dec. 31, 2012.

"Effectively, MWSS will be putting in $53 million, so that the creditor banks can be paid up-front in the amount of $32 million, with the balance to be restructured until 2012 to 2013. Benpres is also immediately released of the guarantees to the extent of the debt paid up-front," the law firm said.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID (PUBLIC BIDDING)

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) wishes to invite bidders for the **NETWORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.**

Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from May 19 to June 1, 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC) Room 1804, 18th Floor Citystate Centre #709 Shaw Blvd. Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 2,000.00.

The Government of the Philippines through the **PhilHealth** had provided funds for this project for which this invitation is issued. The approved budget for this contract is Php 4,000,000.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on June 2, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. at the OSBAC (Rm. 1804).

The bidders shall prepare their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes and drop these in the respective bid boxes located at the above-mentioned address.

Submission of bids will be on June 23, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon at the OSBAC. Opening of bids will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same venue. Any bidder who comes late will not be entertained. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (OSBAC). Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

The BAC-ITR shall determine if each prospective bidder is eligible to participate in the bidding by examining the completeness of each prospective bidder's eligibility requirements or statements against a checklist of requirements, using the non-discretionary **"pass/fail"** criteria.

The Bid Security shall be in an amount at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the approved budget for the contract in the following forms:

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid	Amount of Bid Security
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)	Php 40,000.00
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)	Php 60,000.00
Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)	Php 100,000.00
Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)	Php 4,000,000.00

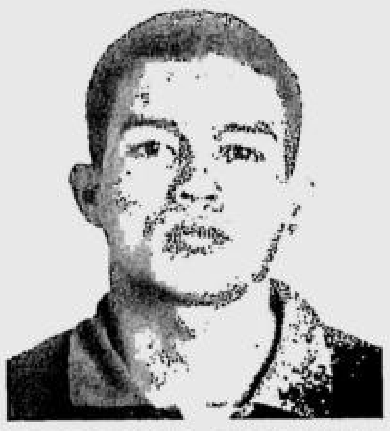
We look forward to your participation in this worthwhile endeavor.

PhilHealth reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PhilHealth further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MELINDA C. MERCADO, CESO IV
SVP, Health Insurance Operations Sector and
Chairperson, BAC-ITR

(PDI - May 16 & 23, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



ELORDE R. CADIMAS

The public is hereby informed that **MR. ELORDE R. CADIMAS**, the former ADPIC warehouse delivery assistant, whose picture appears above has been terminated for cause and is no longer connected with ADP INDUSTRIES CORPORATION since 31 March 2005.

Any transaction entered into by him, or which he may hereafter undertake in behalf of the company after 31 March 2005, shall no longer be honored.

(PDI – May 16, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

The following stock certificates are reportedly lost:

SPI PUBLISHER SERVICES, INC.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
001	1,000	Joe Menito Buot
002	1,000	Ernest L. Cu
003	1,000	Francisco H. Suarez, Jr.
004	1,000	Amelito P. Lopez
005	1,000	Maria Mina M. Rapadas

SPI HEALTHCARE DOCUMENTATION, INC.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
001	1,000	Robert C. Cabato
002	1,000	Ernest L. Cu
003	1,000	Francisco H. Suarez, Jr.
004	1,000	Amelito P. Lopez
005	1,000	Maria Mina M. Rapadas

SPI LITIGATION DIRECT, INC.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
001	1,000	Marian V. Tabjan
002	1,000	Ernest L. Cu
003	1,000	Francisco H. Suarez, Jr.
004	1,000	Amelito P. Lopez
005	1,000	Maria Mina M. Rapadas

SPI SERVISOFT, INC.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
001	1,000	John Michael T. Ticzon
002	1,000	Ernest L. Cu
003	1,000	Francisco H. Suarez, Jr.
004	1,000	Amelito P. Lopez
005	1,000	Maria Mina M. Rapadas

SPI CONTENT SCIENCES, INC.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
001	26,995,000	SPI Technologies, Inc.
002	1,000	Ernest L. Cu
003	3,000,000	Ian Belford
004	1,000	Francisco H. Suarez, Jr.
005	1,000	Roberto C. Cabato
006	1,000	Amelito P. Lopez
007	1,000	Rico L. Kison

PACIFIC SPACE INTL DEVT CORP.

Stock Cert. No.	No. of Shares	Issued to
049	1	Rico L. Kison
048	1	Lucia C. Aguila

- If no contest is received, the respective Companies will issue replacement certificates after one year from date of last publication of this notice, or even before expiration of said period provided the registered owner(s) files a bond or other securities in accordance with law.

(PDI–May 7 & 9 & 16, 2005)

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **June 09, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila, among all interested rice suppliers for the **supply of maximum 100,000 MT, 5% MOLSO long grain white rice, 5%** and **15% brokens** in 50 kilograms net capacity polypropylene bags with an appropriated budget from corporate resources of **Php 1.88B**. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.A.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for all specifications on CFR FO basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of fifteen (15) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of a mandatory countertrade and countertrade performed on best effort. Otherwise, bids shall be considered non-responsive. Arrival period shall be as follows:

Arrival Period		Percentage of Volume to be Offered
NLT July 15, 2005	—	At Least 50%
NLT August 15, 2005	—	Balance

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:

SUPPLIER	VOLUME
government (with good track record)	100,000 MT
private (with good track record)	25,000 MT
Government/private (without track record)	15,000 MT

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. Vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank. Bid bond can be converted to performance bond.

List of Eligibility Requirements and instructions to bidders may be secured starting **16 May 2005** thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Chief III, Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **May 16 to June 08, 2005** (8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on **May 25, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of bids will be on **June 09, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

JESSUP P. NAVARRO
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI – May 16, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
Municipality of Cantilan

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Municipal Government of Cantilan, Surigao del Sur, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract project	: Construction of Sipangpang Mini Hydroelectric with installed capacity of 750 kW
Location	: Barangay Cabangahan, Cantilan, Surigao del Sur
Brief description of the work temporary	: a. Construction of temporary river diversion, facilities and access road; b. Construction of Dam, gluiceway and intake structures with platform c. Construction of Surgetank/surgeshaft (optional) and Steel Penstock and water way structure; d. Construction of a powerhouse /tailrace e. Lifting Mechanism at the Dam f. Electrical fixture for the powerhouse and lighting.
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	: Sixty Five Million Pesos (Php 65,000,000.00)
Funding source	: Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP)

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Screening as well as the Preliminary examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from propsective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	May 20-30, 2005
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Upon receipt of the above
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	June 1-20, 2005

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at the Office of the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee, this LGU, upon submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI) and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00 to the Municipal Treasurer. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding documents after notice to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to the Municipal Treasurer of this LGU.

The LGU of Cantilan assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) VICENTE A. MIRANDA
Municipal Budget Officer
BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 16 & 23, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR
5th Floor Sandiganbayan Centennial Building
Commonwealth Avenue corner Batasan Road, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS
In Compliance with RA 7041

PROSECUTION BUREAU I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X
Special Prosecution Officer III – (14) positions, SG-28 (LAWYERS)

Item Nos.
OMBA-SPPO3-16.2004, OMBA-SPPO3-15-2004
OMBA-SPPO3-14-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-13-2004,
OMBA-SPPO3-12-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-11.2004,
OMBA-SPPO3-10-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-17-2004,
OMBA-SPPO3-20-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-21-2004,
OMBA-SPPO3-22-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-18.2004
OMBA-SPPO3-19-2004, OMBA-SPPO3-23-2004,

Qualification Standards

Education	Bachelor of Laws
Experience	5 years of relevant experience
Training	24 hours of relevant training
Eligibility	RA 1080

PROSECUTION BUREAU V, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X
Special Prosecution Officer II – (10) positions, SG-27 (LAWYERS)

Item Nos.
OMBA-SPPO2-24-2004, OMBA-SPP02-19-2004,
OMBA-SPPO2-18-2004, OMBA-SPPO2-25-2004,
OMBA-SPPO2-29-2004, OMBA-SPPO2-30-2004,
OMBA-SPPO2-31-2004, OMBA-SPPO2-26-2004,
OMBA-SPPO2-27-2004, OMBA-SPPO2-28-2004

Qualification Standards

Education	Bachelor of Laws
Experience	4 years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation / prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative / criminal cases, legal research or other related work
Training	24 hours of relevant training
Eligibility	RA 1080

PROSECUTION BUREAU I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X
Special Prosecution OfficerI – (14) positions (LAWYERS)

Item Nos.
OMBA-SPPO1-31-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-27-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-30-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-29-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-28-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-33-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-32-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-26-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-34-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-35-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-38-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-36-2004,
OMBA-SPPO1-37-2004, OMBA-SPPO1-39-2004

Qualification Standards

Education	: Bachelor of Laws
Experience	3 years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation / prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative / criminal cases, legal research or other related work
Training	24 hours of relevant training
Eligibility	RA 1080

PROSECUTION BUREAU IX AND X
Secretary II – (2) positions, SG-9

Item Nos.
OMBA-SEC2-41-2004
OMBA-SEC2-40-2004

Qualification Standards

Education	Completion of two (2) years studies in college;
Experience	1 year of relevant experience;
Training	4 hours of relevant training;
Eligibility	Career Service (Subprofessional); First Level Eligibility.

Interested applicants should submit their applications to the Administrative Division, Office of the Special Prosecutor, 5th Floor Sandiganbayan Centennial Building, Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City within 20 working days from the date of this publication, the following requirements: (1) A letter stating the position applied for; (2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (Revised CSC Form 212); (3) 1" x 1" picture (colored); (4) Bar Rating/CSC Certificate of Eligibility; (5) Transcript of Records; (6) Certificate of Seminars/Training attended; (7) Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable); (8) PAR, for last two rating periods (for current government employees only); (9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT (ZCWD) is inviting Interested Licensed Suppliers of Water Meters to submit bids for the following

PR/JO NO.	UNITS	DESCRIPTION
8190	1,500 pcs	Water Meter ½" x 190 mm body length with tail pieces & gasket Class "B" Approved Budget Cost: P1,983,750.00

Interested Licensed Suppliers may obtain *Bid Forms and Detailed Specifications* at the BAC Secretariat, 2/F ZCWD Main Bldg., Pilar Street, Zamboanga City upon payment of a minimal non-refundable fee of P500.00. Issuance of Bid documents will be on May 9 to May 16, 2005 only. After these dates the BAC Secretariat will no longer issue any bid documents.

Suppliers must submit the following documents.

A. Legal Documents
   1. A copy of the Department of Trade & Industry Certificate of Registration of Business Name or Security & Exchange Commission Certificate, whichever may be appropriate under existing laws of the Philippines.
   2. Valid and Current mayor's Permit/Municipal license for the year 2005
   3. Taxpayer's Identification Number
   4. Statement from Bidder that it is not "Blacklisted" or barred from bidding by the government or any of its agencies, offices, corporations or LGUs, including non-inclusion in the consolidated Blacklisted Report issued by the GPPB as provided in Section 69.4 of IRRA-A, R.A. 9184

B. Technical Documents
   1 Statement of the prospective bidder of all its on-going and completed government and private contracts within the relevant period, where applicable, including contracts awarded but not yet started, if any. The statement shall state for each contract whether said contract is:
      a. Ongoing, Completed or Awarded but not yet started within the relevant period, where applicable. The statement include, for each contract, the following:
         The Name of the Contract:
         Date of Contract,
         Amount of contract and value of outstanding contracts,
         Date of Contract Started;
         End user's acceptance, if completed; and
         Specification whether prospective bidder is a manufacturer, supplier or distributor; or
      b. Similar or not in nature and complexity to the contract to be bid.

C. Financial Documents
   1. The prospective bidder's audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the Bureau of Internal Revenue or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing among others, the prospective bidder's total and current Assets and Liabilities; as of the year 2004 or the latest BIR stamped Financial Statement.
   2. The Prospective bidder's computation for its Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC), which shall be accordance with Section 23. 11 of IRR-A, RA 9184 or a commitment from a licensed bank to extend to it a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid, or a cash deposit certificate, in an amount not lower than that set by the procuring entity in the Bidding Documents, which shall be at least equal to ten percent (10%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid

Other Documents
   1. Letter of commitment of the prospective bidder to participate in the bidding
   2. The Prospective Bidder or its duly authorized representative shall certify under oath that each of the documents submitted is an original copy of a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original

Pre-bid Conference	May 19, 2005	2:00 PM at the 2/F, ZCWD Main Bldg. Pilar St., Zamboanga City
Submission of Bids	May 24, 2005	2:00 PM at the 2/F, ZCWD Main Bldg. Pilar St., Zamboanga City

The ZCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive minor informalities in the bid received and to award the contract to the supplier whose bid, as evaluated by the BAC 1, is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC 1 Chairman

(PDI - May 16, 2005)

UCPB Rural Bank, Inc.

UCPB RURAL BANK, INC.
NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING
June 06, 2005
UCPB Rural Bank Head Office
Laguindingan, Misamis Oriental
2:00 P.M.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Proof of Notice of Meeting
III. Certification of Quorum
IV. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 21, 2004
V. Chairman's Annual Report
VI. Approval of the Audited Financial Statements
VII. Ratification and Confirmation of All Acts of the Board of Directors and of Management Since the Last Stockholders' Meeting
VIII. Election of the Members of the Board of Directors
IX. Approval of the Plan of Merger
X. Other Matters
XI. Adjournment

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOSE A. BARCELON
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - May 16, 2005)

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★★ Mr EARTH SPA ★★ 1236 Kamuning rd QC 4102182

★Mr BODY PHYSIQUE ★ 11A Kamias QC 4350078

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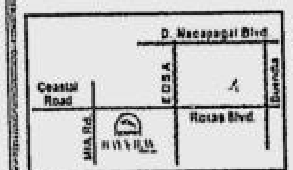

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NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT EXECUTED BETWEEN ORIENTAL ASSURANCE CORPORATION AND PROSPERITUS INSURANCE AGENCY CORPORATION DATED JANUARY 29, 2004 HAS BEEN TERMINATED LAST 8 MAY 2005.

ANY TRANSACTION INVOLVING OR CONNECTED WITH THE AFORESAID CONTRACT ARE NO LONGER VALID IF ENTERED INTO ON OR AFTER 8 MAY 2005.

(PDI - May 16, 2005)

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

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1.5% w/oTaking Car 565683475

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Gregorio F. Zulueta was extrajudicially settled among his heirs with waiver of rights as per Doc No 345 Page No 71, Book No 32, Series of 1997 of Notary Public Mario G. Ramos of Manila (PDI-May 2, 9 & 16, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of PEDRO M MALE SR who died on July 23, 1993 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs before Notary Public Orlando O Alles of Quezon City as per Doc No 213; Page No. 44; Book no. 69, Series of 2005 (PDI - May 9,16 & 23, 2005)

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In Loving Memory

on the 38th Death Anniversary of

EDILBERTO “EDDY” G. YABUT

who joined our Lord on May 17, 1967

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at the following churches:

St. John Bosco Parish, Makati City	6:30 A.M.
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Makati City	6:00 A.M.
Mount Carmel Shrine, Quezon City	6:00 A.M.
Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Parish, Quezon City	6:00 A.M.
St. Joseph Cathedral, Baguio City	6:15 A.M.
Baguio Cathedral, Baguio City	7:00 A.M.
Our Lady of Pilar Parish Church, Cauayan, Isabela	6:00 A.M.
St. Ferdinand Cathedral, Lucena City	6:00 P.M.
Basilica of the Immaculate Concepcion, Batangas City	6:15 A.M.
Redemptorist Church, Cebu City	6:00 A.M.
Our Lady of Sacred Heart Parish Church, Cebu City	6:30 A.M.
Sta. Ana Shrine Parish, Davao City	6:00 A.M.
Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Cotabato City	5:30 P.M.
St. Michael Cathedral, Iligan City	6:00 A.M.
Nazareno Church, Cagayan de Oro City	5:30 P.M.
Sto. Niño Parish Church, Gen. Santos City	5:30 P.M.

His Family requests friends and kin to remember him in their prayers.

In Loving Memory

on the 1st Death Anniversary of

ENRIQUE ZOBEL

1927 – 2004
Masses will be offered tomorrow, 17th of May 2005
at the following churches:

St. Alphonsus De Liguori Chapel Magallanes Village, Makati City	6:15 a.m.
San Ildefonso Parish Pio del Pilar, Makati City	6:00 a.m.
Hacienda Bigaa Calatagan, Batangas	11:00 a.m.
Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati City	12:15 p.m.
Sto. Niño de la Paz Chapel Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City	12:15 p.m.
St. John Bosco Parish Pasay Road, Makati City	6:00 p.m.
St. James, The Great Parish Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City	6:30 p.m.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16

Raul Reyes Miranda

November 13, 1962 – May 14, 2005
Passed away at the age of 42
after receiving the Last Sacraments

He is survived by his loving son **JOSEPH NICCOLO**; devoted mother **SALOME R. MIRANDA**; loving aunt **MAXIMA S. REYES**; loving siblings **SARA MIRANDA-CROSSLEY, RAMON, CONRADO, AGNES MIRANDA-CASTILLO**; in-laws **JOHN N. CROSSLEY, BIENVENIDO V. CASTILLO, JR.** and **LIDA RAJAS-MIRANDA**; nephews and nieces **JOHN PATRICK MIRANDA, ANA MARIA CASTILLO, CARLO RAMON CASTILLO** and **IRENE JASMINE CASTILLO.**

His remains lie in state at the Ascension Chapel, Claret Church, U.P. Village, Quezon City.

Burial will be on Thursday, May 19, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 9:00 A.M. Holy Mass.

TELESFORA DANGALAN BAILON

Peacefully joined her Creator on 13th May 2005
at the age of 82.

Her loving children **Leny, Auring, Dolly (†), Joe, Yolly, Linda, Roger, Becky, Alice, Aida, Luis, Mimi, Nene**; children-in-law **Ben (†), Efren, Ompong, Cora, Wally, Celia, Shinji, Johnny, Mila, Katsuhiko, Randy**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

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of our Beloved

TIU YAP SIOK CHIENG

(Mother of our President-George T. Barcelon)

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announce her joining the Creator
on **May 13, 2005** *at the age of 82*

Her children **Erene** *and* **Edward,**
George *and* **Irene,**
Judy *and* **Jose,**
Charles *and* **Cristina,**
Edward *and* **Deanna;**

Her grandchildren; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 1 of the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City

Interment will be on Friday, May 20, 2005, after the 8:00 am necrological service. Burial will follow at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque.

ADELINA “DELY” BEJAR VILLASEÑOR

Passed away in the peace
of Our Lord on May 14, 2005.

Her husband, **Filemon**; children Mayor **Bonbon** and Josie Carpio, **Bebot** and Glenn Jover, and **Mia**; grandchildren, **Kayan** and Jonathan, **Yayin, Avin, Barbie, Dedette** and **Luigi**; great-grandchildren, **Janelle** and **Miggy**; brother and sisters, **Manuel** and Norma, **Luz Villanueva**, and **Norma**; nieces and nephews and other relatives request the readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

She will lie in state at the family home in Lucban, Quezon until May 18, 2005 when she will be brought to Arlington Memorial Chapels in Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

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National Artist Kiukok dies

NATIONAL Artist Ang Kiukok passed away last May 9, 6:45 PM at his residence in Quezon City, Metro Manila. He succumbed to prostate cancer. He was 74 years old.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

He is survived by his wife Mary Ang, his children Angeline Ang, Andrew Ang, Arlene Ang-Umelesi, daughter-in-law Hermie Ang, son-in-law Lucio Umelesi and granddaughter Andria Katrina Ang.

Ang Kiukok is credited with having pioneered Philippine Expressionism in painting. He is known for his interpretations of themes, like the mother and child, Christ crucified or suffering, heaps of junk, roosters crowing, dogs fighting, a couple making love.

Proclaimed National Artist in 2001 by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, he was recognized for "his expressionist aesthetics whose recurring figures of socio-political vicissitudes heightened the redemption of experience from the terror of our times, and of his consistent excellence and dedication that inspired numerous contemporary Filipino artists."

Ang Kiukok was born in Davao City on March 1, 1931 to immigrant Chinese parents Vicente Ang and Chin Lim. Ang Kiukok studied art at the University of Santo Tomas from 1952 to 1954. He also taught art in a school for children of overseas Chinese.

Ang Kiukok held his first one-man exhibit in 1954 at the Contemporary Arts Gallery. He was many times awarded by the Art Association of the Philippines for his works "The Bird", "Still Life", "Still Life in Red", "Geometric Still-Life" and "Fish". In 1976, he received the Patnubay ng Sining at Kalinangan Award from the City of Manila and in 1978, he was named outstanding alumnus by his alma mater UST. In 1980, his "Images of Modern Angst" was a finalist in the Mobil Art Awards.

Today, the works of Ang Kiukok are displayed in various public and private collections here and abroad, including that of the National Museum, the Ateneo Art Gallery, the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and the National Historical Commission.

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the CCP are making preparations for state honors for Ang Kiukok. His remains will be cremated today, May 16. A necrological ceremony will be held on May 15, 5 PM at the CCP Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo.

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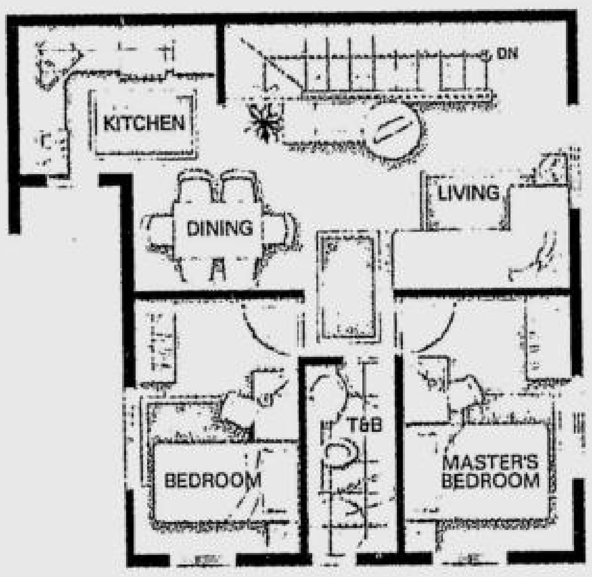
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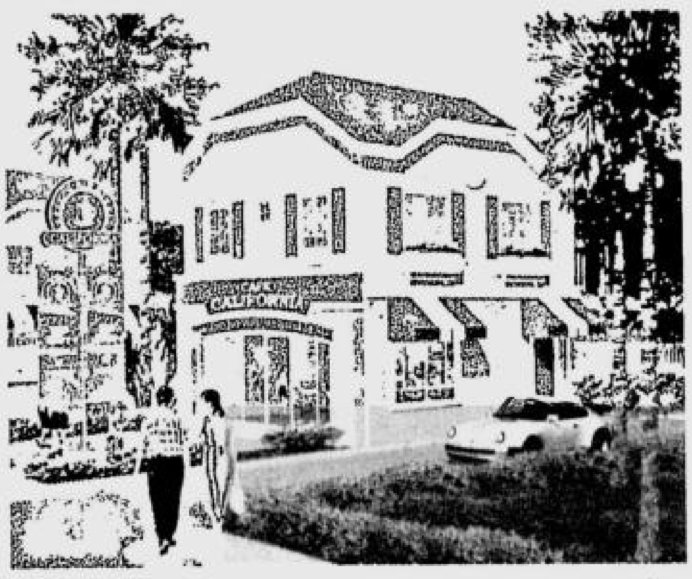

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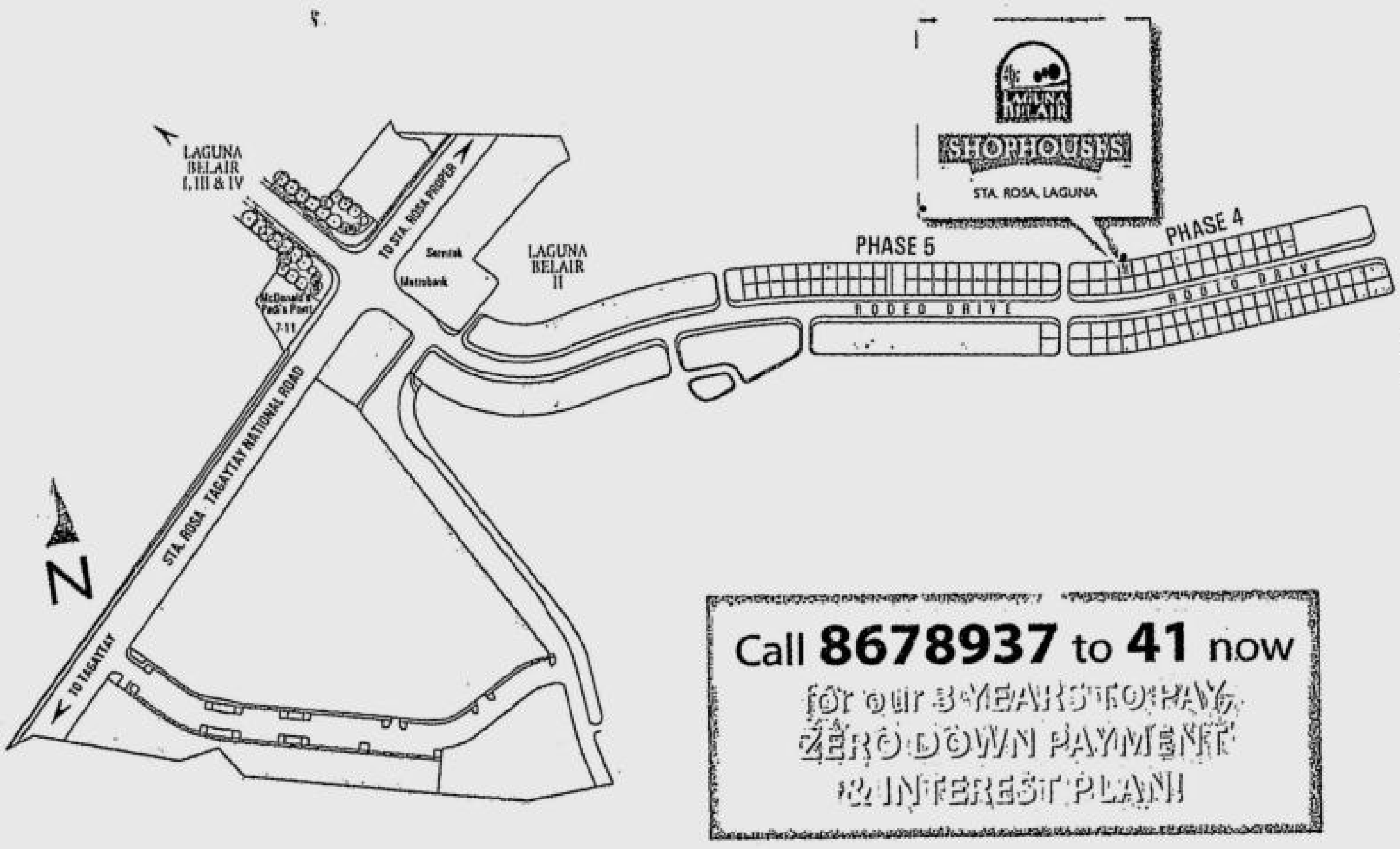
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FROM just giving loans, SB Corp. is now moving into equity financing

SB Corp. partners with SMEs

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE SMALL Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. is taking a gamble in an equity financing facility that intends to provide a minimum of P5 million for under-capitalized new and existing firms with profitable business ventures.

The task of SB Corp. is to provide loans to small ventures. The facility makes them partners of the venture.

SB Corp. chair Zorayda Amelia C. Alonzo says in an interview that other financing institutions are wary of venturing into equity financing because the credit risk doubles or triples with any new business enterprise.

Based on several proposals, small to medium scale enterprises with promising business ideas are mostly short of the needed capital and at times their financing requirements are too small as against the minimum credit amount set by commercial banks and other financing firms, Alonzo explains.

"We saw that there is a need for equity financing in the country. The Equity Ventures Program hopes to set an example to other financing firms that it can be done," says Alonzo.

Investment partners

SB Corp.'s Equity Ventures Program president and COO Benel P. Lagua says to make it more viable, the company sought tie-ups with other investment firms that have the expertise in equity financing.

Lagua notes that equity investment partners are required to match SB Corp.'s approved amount of credit.

"Our investment partner understands and are willing to invest in small and medium enterprises ready to develop a higher level of marketing, technical, management and production operations," shares Lagua.

SB Corp.'s first equity investment partner is the United States-based EnviroVentures Corp. It helped finance a small Filipino company engaged in telecommunications.

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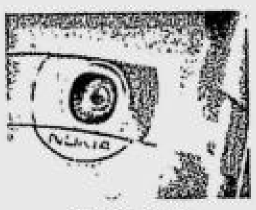

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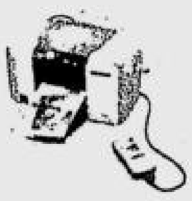

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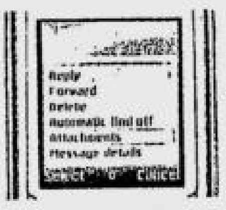

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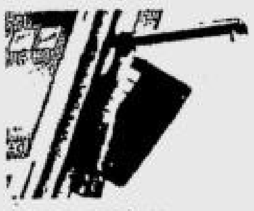

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Leveraging your organization's knowledge resources

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Dr. Niceto S. Poblador

IN today's hurly-burly world of business, strategic advantage is no longer assured by superior products, advanced technologies, or market dominance (think IBM, GM, Boeing). In a fast-paced business environment, these are fleeting advantages that are soon eroded by largely unpredictable technological and market developments. To sustain competitive advantage under turbulent conditions, organizations must focus more inwardly into their resource endowments, in particular, their knowledge resources. This is especially true for "New Economy" businesses such as those in the service sector.

It is now generally conceded that in this information-driven world, knowledge has become the most valuable resource. Ironically, it is one that most managers have given scant attention to, and for good reasons. Unlike physical and financial assets, knowledge is an economic resource that defies quantification and is seldom given a monetary value. It is an intangible asset that many managers are loathe to factor explicitly into their value calculations. This neglect is unfortunate.

What constitutes organizational knowledge?

It would seem obvious to many of us that an organization's knowledge base consists primarily of the specific knowledge and technical skills possessed by its members. On closer examination, however, we find that the explicit knowledge possessed by its managerial and technical personnel does not give the firm a lasting competitive edge. These are, after all, skills that are readily accessed on the market and are just as easily lost through normal attrition. Moreover, these skills atrophy over time.

Another obvious part of a firm's knowledge arsenal is the technical information stored in its database, along with knowledge that is embodied in its production operations and in its products and services. A good part of this stock of knowledge is in the form of intellectual property that is protected by patents and copyrights. Again, while not unimportant, these technical knowledge assets are only of temporary strategic value to the firm because their economic worth diminishes over time. In themselves, these cannot be regarded as lasting sources of competitive advantage, as we are sure Steve Jobs must have known about iTunes.

Yet another class of firm-specific knowledge resources are its operational procedures or routines. The result of trial-and-error learning over long stretches of time, routines embody knowledge that is needed for repeated implementation in the organization's day-to-day operations. While useful in achieving efficiency and high productivity, routines tend to calcify over time, and cease to be useful under changed circumstances. These, too, are not of great strategic value to the firm.

From a long-run, strategic point of view, an organization's most valuable knowledge resource are its capabilities (or competencies). These are organizational knowledge of a higher order that enables the firm to maximize value by maintaining coordinated and collaborative effort, and by locating, acquiring, developing and bringing together the required complementary knowledge resources. In contrast to most other forms of organizational knowledge which are explicit, specific and documented pieces of information, capabilities are tacit in nature. They are embedded in the organization's administrative mechanisms, in its leadership skills, in its external linkages, and in its culture.

The learning organization

To survive and maintain its viability over the long haul, the firm must develop its ability to continuously update and change its endowment of specific knowledge assets that are lodged in its employees, its databases, its products, and its routines. It must evolve. It must transform itself into a learning organization.

Learning organizations have the following attributes:

(a) They have the unique capability of combining complementary knowledge resources within the organization. This requires a strong emphasis on collaborative effort and the unhampered flow of information among its subunits and individual workers.

(b) They facilitate the full utilization of local knowledge by allocating decision rights to individuals and units where the relevant information resides.

In formulating an effective KM strategy, the following aspects of knowledge and of the learning process must be kept in mind:

(a) Knowledge is a unique form of economic resource in that it is subject to increasing rather than diminishing returns. The more a firm invests in its knowledge asset base, the more valuable it becomes. Put differently, we are saying that each increment to knowledge costs less and less to produce.

(b) Learning is evolutionary rather than revolutionary. In a complex and continuously evolving environment, change is seldom achieved by a process of re-engineering, or by finding an optimal solution.

(c) Learning takes each organization on a unique path of development. Choices made at different points in time "lock in" an organization into situations that are neither fully anticipated nor entirely desirable.

An important implication of "path dependence" in the learning process is that quick fixes, such as the usual strategy of adopting "best practices," have little rational basis, except perhaps in the most generic sense. For example, Toyota's highly acclaimed "kaizen" system and GE's Six Sigma formula have not been successfully adopted by other organizations for the reason that they did not posses the required competencies.

Outsourcing, open sourcing

One way by which an organization can enhance its knowledge base is by acquiring information from outside sources rather than by developing this within the firm. There are many reasons for this practice, but they all boil down to choosing whichever option will result in lower costs. The revolutionary transformation that has taken place in the pharmaceutical industry has shown that in many cases, R&D work is better outsourced than done in-house.

Firms in the knowledge business—for example, management and engineering consulting firms, software developers, media organizations—earn a living by selling what are called "information goods." However, the rationale for making knowledge available to others for free after spending a good deal of money in developing it, or making it available to competitors for a song, is lost on many of us. Why, for example, is the Linux operating system open sourced? Why did IBM franchise out its basic PC technology to Compaq and others? The new economics of information provides a number clues:

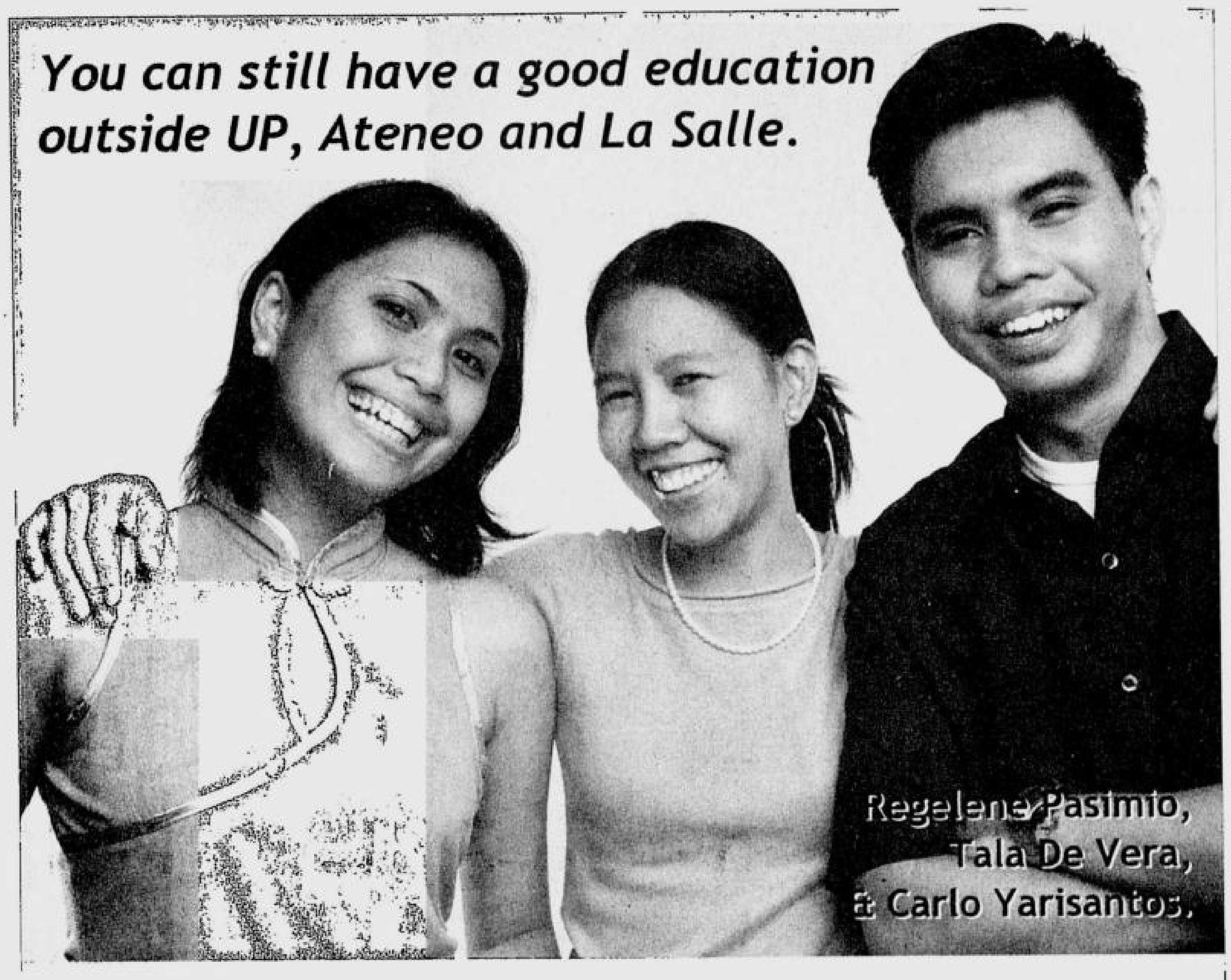
(a) The use of knowledge is said to be "non-rivalrous;" sharing it with others does not reduce its intrinsic usefulness.

(b) Knowledge is subject to what are called "network externalities." The more users there are, the greater its strategic value.

(c) Knowledge is in the nature of a public good, and making it generally available creates value for society.

One final note about KM: Many organizations are leery at making themselves part of a value network for fear of exposing their informational assets to potential competitors. This zealousness in keeping company information under locks is largely without basis because other organizations simply do not have the capability (or absorptive capacity) to make full use of these explicit knowledge assets.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is a knowledge management consultant, former professor of University of the Philippines, and current professor at the Baguio Colleges Foundation. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)



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MOVEMENT

Nestle has new CEO

NANDKISHORE

NESTLE Philippines Inc. announces the recent appointment of Doreswamy Nandkishore, 46, as chairman and chief executive officer of the company. Nandkishore, who is from India, was president and CEO of Nestlé Indonesia, a position which he assumed in March 2003, after serving in the same market as executive vice president for marketing and sales from July 2000 to February 2003.

Before his last two assignments with Nestlé Indonesia, Nandkishore served as marketing advisor at Nestec SA in Switzerland.

He started his career in Nestlé India as product executive for milk in 1989, then became product group manager for chocolate and confectionery in the same year. In 1996, he was transferred to Nestlé Indonesia, where he assumed the post of vice president-marketing (confectionery).

Nandkishore has a master's degree in Management from the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad and a bachelor's degree in Electronics and Instrumentation from the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi.

SB Corp. partners . . .

From page B2-1

sustainable development and environmental well-being in the Philippines and would not otherwise have access to affordable credit. Each has an environmental component as a core service or product.

SB Corp. and EnviroVentures Inc. provided some P12 million equity financing for DRI Co. Inc. DRI's clients are the telecommunications, cable operators and network infrastructure vendor operators.

In its effort to accelerate the implementation of its equity financing facility called the Equity Ventures Program, SB Corp. recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Iron Capital Management Corp. (Iron Cap) as its second investment partner.

Iron Cap, on the other hand, which is a new company established by a group of Filipino-stockbrokers who use to work at the Wall Street, would broaden SB Corp.'s investments options.

"Iron Cap has its expertise in due diligence work and they have a P75-million fund intended for investments in consumer products, consumer finance, education, healthcare, outsourcing, tourism and retail industries," Lagua notes.

Iron Cap is willing to finance SMEs with asset size of not more than P100 million, Alonzo shares.

She says that a provision of the MOA would be a technology transfer enabling SB Corp.'s staff to be trained on the essentials of deal evaluation, due diligence, terms negotiation, closing and monitoring of investments required for equity financing.

Phone firm set to become world's top camera seller

NOKIA
Nseries

PHONES and cameras, phones with cameras.

The line between the two products became more blurred when a mobile phone manufacturer announced that it was poised to become the biggest seller of digital cameras in the world.

The fusion of the two distinct products into a single practical device has enabled Nokia to corner a lucrative market.

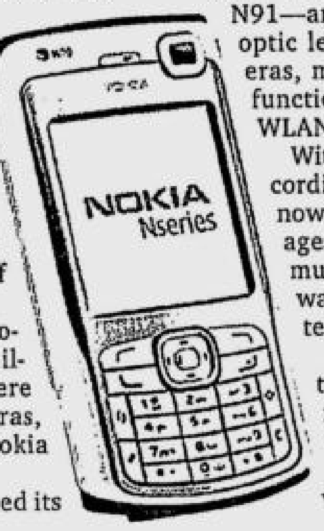
Steve Lewis, director of Nokia's imaging business unit, said that by the end of 2005, over half a billion people worldwide would have camera phones.

The firm expects to sell about 100 million camera phones over the next few years, Lewis said during the launch of the latest line of Nokia units in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

At the same time, Nokia also wants to put 25 million smart phones and 40 million music devices in the hands of consumers.

In 2004, global sales of mobile phones reached 740 million, 643 million of which were equipped with digital cameras, according to Tyler McGee, Nokia vice president of sales.

On April 27, Nokia launched its latest devices under the Nseries line. The new units—the N70, N90 and N91—are equipped with Carl Zeiss optic lenses for the megapixel cameras, multi-gigabyte memory, video functions with VHS resolution and WLAN.



With the new Nseries phones, according to Nokia, mobile users can now create and print quality images, check their email, listen to music, surf the Internet, and even watch their favorite shows on television.

Users may choose from more than 3,000 applications to add new functions to their devices.

They may also conduct two-way video calls, video sharing and avail of multiple messaging options.

During the panel discussion held the day after the launch, Mauro Montanaro of Nokia Asia-Pacific, said that the phones were actually "powerful" computers with a comprehensive set of multimedia features."

The features of Nokia's Nseries phones are keyed to 3G technology.

Eric Olona

THE NEW Nseries line from Nokia: The N91 (extreme left), N70 (left) and the N90 (right).

Video game illustrators seek artistic respect

LOS ANGELES—The portrait depicts a pop-culture icon past well his prime, toothless, slouched and hooked onto an intravenous drip of yellow pellets.

Meet Pac-Man in the sunset of his life—as imagined by artist Greg Simkins.

As video games slip into the cultural mainstream, more artists are finding inspiration in their images and music. And, like their predecessors in the pioneering days of film, the creative designers who work in the $7 billion industry are aiming for something more than commercial success: They want artistic recognition.

Nostalgia

"Everyone bitches that games are not art, so let's show them otherwise," said John Gibson, curator of an irreverent Hollywood show of art inspired by nostalgia for the classic era of gaming—all of 15 years ago.

Packed with guests and pulsing with "micro music" from the soundtracks to old games, the prize of the opening night at the new Gallery Nineteen Eighty Eight was the painting of the over-the-hill Pac-Man, which sold for $3,000.

"I've been painting the back alleys around here for years and now I'm finally in the shop," said Simkins, who in his youth was active as a graffiti artist in the neighborhood and who until recently worked for game publisher Activision.

Across town, the more staid Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Lacma) is displaying video-game art as part of a competition under way called "Into the Pixel."

"We're trying to make static something which by its very nature is active," said lead juror Kevin Salatino, curator for prints and drawings at Lacma. "In the art world, we stopped mimicking reality so long ago, we're always interested in alternative ways of representing reality."

First-generation gamers

The opening of the show called "I Am 8 Bit" at Gallery Nineteen Eighty Eight in Hollywood drew the city's young and beautiful to upscale Melrose Avenue on a breezy spring night with a nostalgic look at the good, old days of gaming.

"There's a nostalgia value out there. Look at the gamers who are out there now, the first-generation gamers. They're in their 40s now. You do have sort of an aging population there sort of affectionately looking back," said Marc Sherrod, academic director of the game and art design program at the Art Institute of California-San Francisco.

A number of the pieces at the Hollywood show featured Mario, the squat Italian plumber with the handlebar moustache who was among the biggest youth icons of the mid-1980s.

Mario mania

The Mario mania can be extreme. "I would love to take a year of my life and do my Mario movement," said Gabe Swarr, an animator with three Mario-themed pieces at the show.

With some polls suggesting that nearly all recent American college students have played video games, throwback T-shirts, bumper stickers and games are a big and growing business.

"Anybody under 35, games are as much a part of their lives as classic movies," said Keith Robinson, president of Intellivision Productions, a company dedicated to classic gaming. Robinson was a game programmer for the original Intellivision, one of the pioneers of the industry.

With a new audience coming of age after having grown up with games, many artists see an emerging legitimacy.

"A lot more artists are being drawn to the games space," said Rich Mahon, a veteran of paintings for movies who worked on the Lacma exhibit entry "Chinatown Level Study" from the game "The Matrix: Path of Neo."

Reuters

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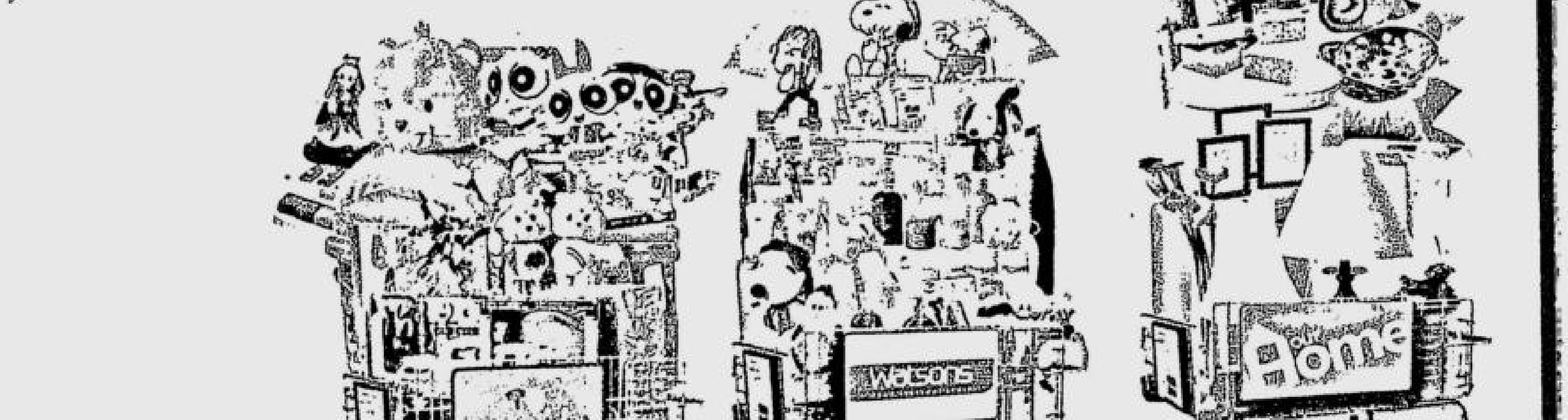

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RP runs after $68-B global health and wellness market

FROM right: DTI Usec for SME Development Zorayda Amelia C. Alonzo, Citem executive director Felicitas Agoncillo-Reyes and officer-in-charge, natural products division, Citem Girlie R. Sarmiento during the Bio-Search 2005 press conference held at the Deli Fresh Restaurant in Shangri-la Plaza Mall in Mandaluyong City. ROGER CARPIO

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SALES of herbal and natural products are shooting up with the emergence of market breakthroughs like papaya-based skin whiteners and teas from various local leaves.

To cultivate such successes, the government is pushing for the further development of the sector in a bid to grab a greater part of the $68-billion global health and wellness market.

Part of these efforts is the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions' recently concluded three-day Bio-Search 2005—considered the launching pad of the so-called nutraceuticals and cosmeceuticals, as well as natural food supplements and other products derived from natural and organic resources.

"Nutraceuticals" refer to herbal and medicinal plant-derived remedies while "cosmeceuticals" refer to plant-derived personal care products.

This year's Bio-Search was held at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, and came at the heel of the 1st International Food Exhibition (Ifex symposium).

When it was started in 1997, Bio-Search highlighted a whole range of products and services from natural, herbal and organic to environment-friendly ones.

A repositioning last year made Bio-Search more focused on natural and herbal/medicinal products.

According to Citem, the Department of Trade and Industry's exports promotion agency, some of the local herbal and natural products with "unlimited commercial potential" were first unveiled in Bio-Search.

These products include teas derived from banaba, ampalaya, lagundi, sambong, yerba buena, and tsaang-gubat.

The banaba's corosolic acid insulin-like compounds have made it popular among diabetics and weight watchers while ampalaya (bitter gourd) has become popular as a source of iron and due to its ability to arrest an excessive increase in blood sugar.

Ampalaya is now considered one of the most important ingredients of products in the local food supplements market.

Another product that has caught the attention of the market through Bio-Search is virgin coconut oil (VCNO), which is said to aid the lowering of cholesterol levels and speeding up the rate of the body's metabolism.

Aside from that, VCNO is believed to be potent against microbes and viruses and at the same time accepted as an excellent personal care product that helps protect and soften the skin.

Yet another market grabber is the papaya, known for its skin-whitening property. Citem cited reports that papaya-based skin care products raked in P20 billion in sales last year.

Last month, Citem officials also pushed for development of the country's exports of organic and natural products which they said posted $45.9 million in

RP/B2-7

Agribusiness option: Will it work?

AGRICULTURE is the heart of the Philippine rural economy. It is the primary source of income of 40 percent working Filipinos excluding those in agriculture-based industries and services. It also accounts for 22 percent of the country's gross national product (GNP) and is thus a vital concern of the government in its efforts to alleviate poverty and compete in the global market.

The government intends to develop at least 2 million hectares of new land for agribusiness in order to contribute 2 million out of the 10 million jobs targeted as a legacy by 2010.

The development of two million hectares of new agribusiness lands intends to intensify production intensity and diversify choice of crops. For fisheries, fish culture will be encouraged in idle off-shore and inland waters.

Existing farmlands and fishery activities will expand their product mix and adopt new technologies. New markets will be tapped, including the $150 billion global Halal food market, high value crops with higher yield and better income potential shall be promoted, and value-added activities such as packaging and agri-processing will be encouraged.

From 2004 to 2010, the agriculture sector expects that the propagation of staple crops such as corn and rice will be accompanied by setting aside lands for the planting of higher value food and nonfood crops.

For the country's existing riceland, 875,130 hectares will be the target of productivity enhancement programs. This activity should be able to generate 80,860 jobs. As for corn, 280,250 hectares of new areas will be planted to this crop within the six-year period and in the process create 80,860 new jobs.

For fisheries, fish culture—especially for bangus and tilapia—will be intensified with the opening up of 3,190 and 8,200 hectares of fishpens and cages, respectively. This will be accompanied by expanded seaweeds culture by opening up 5,820 hectares of coastal waters to this activity. More than 500,000 new jobs are expected to be created as a result.

Mariculture, or the farming of fish and other aquatic products in open sea fish cages, will also be promoted. This exciting business opportunity is expected to generate 234,000 new jobs within six years.

High-value food crops will also be cultivated alongside palay and corn. This strategy envisions the opening up of 292,690 hectares of idle lands for the planting of these crops such as pineapple, coffee, onion, cassava, vegetables, garlic and pineapple. The denuded uplands could be replanted to fruit trees such as durian, mango, banana, citrus and pili.

For nonfood high value crops, 1.4 million hectares are eyed for planting to rubber, abaca, coconut and tobacco. Overall, 1.7 million new jobs could be created from the combined activities using existing farmlands and idle as well as marginal lands.

To ensure that these targets are met, the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan has an evaluation and monitoring system in place that will immediately pinpoint problems and gaps that need to be addressed. *Michelle Ardales and Edwin P. Daiwey, DevNews & Features*

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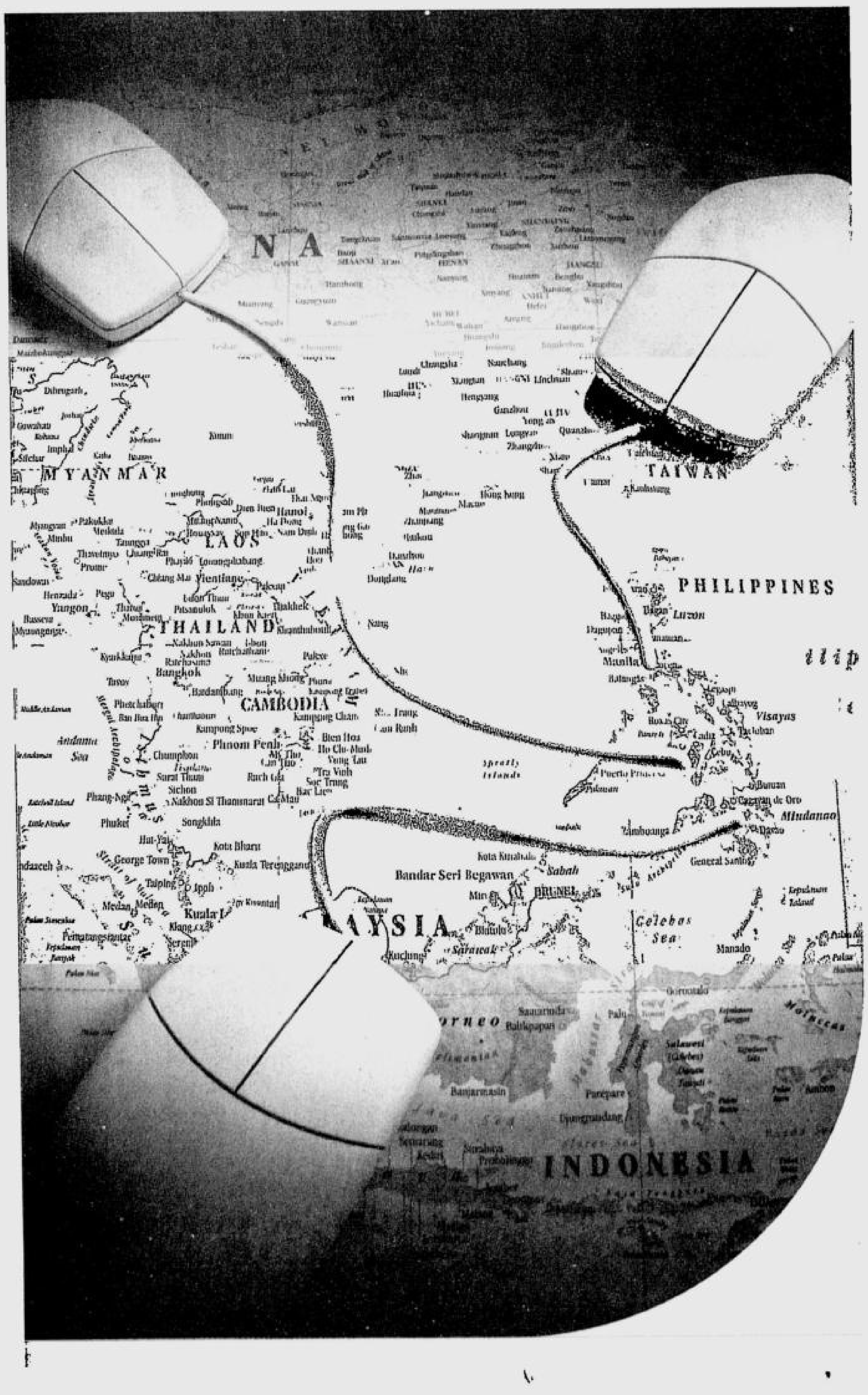

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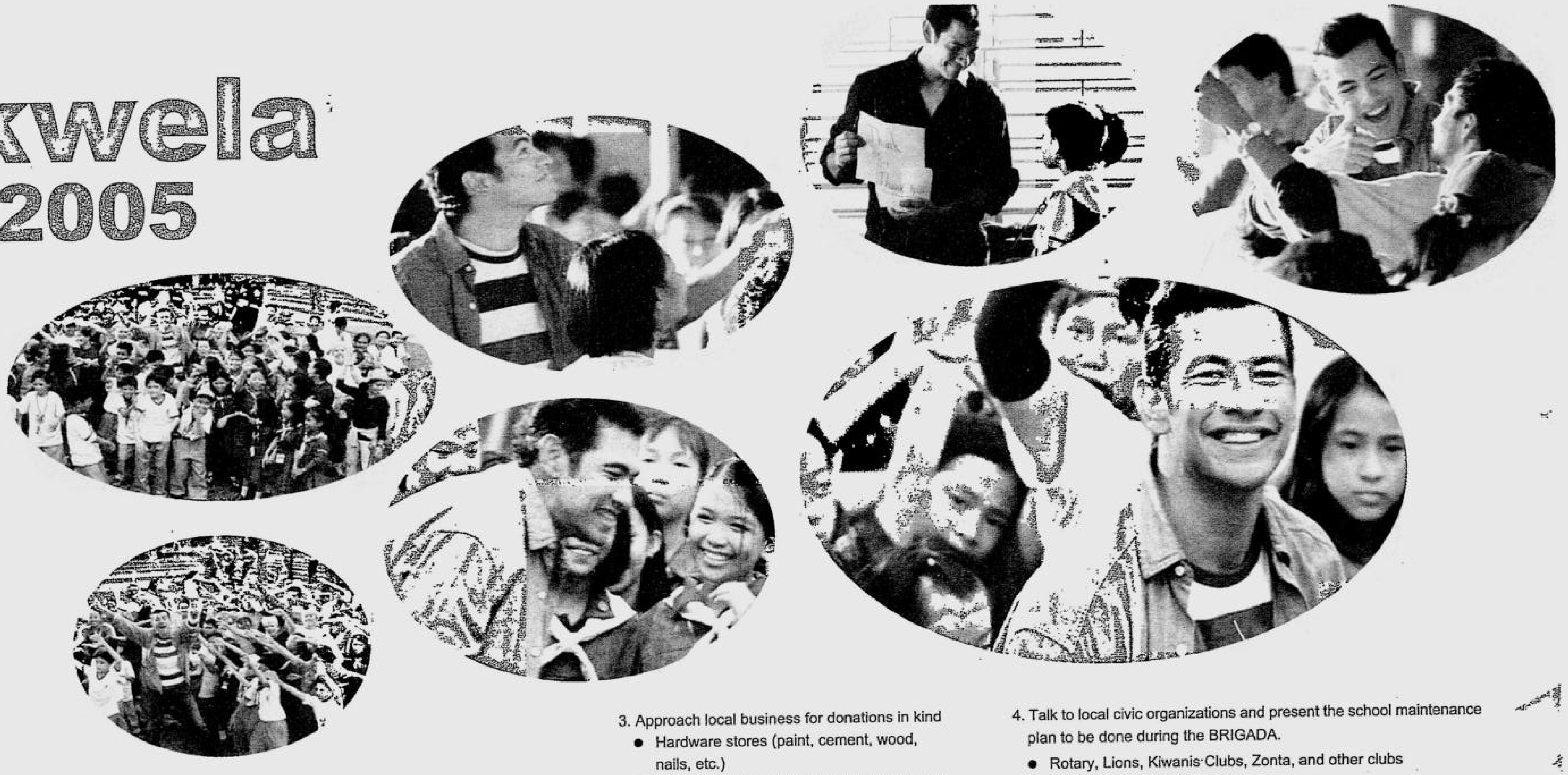

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Volunteer for the
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Maintenance Week**
May 16-21, 2005

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR OUR SCHOOL?

- Paint roofs (add two or more years to the life of the roof)
- Cement existing footpaths and drains
- Repair comfort rooms and toilets
- Repair leaking water pipes
- Paint exterior walls of classrooms
- Repair or replace ceiling boards
- Repair, refinish or repaint chairs, desks, furniture
- Clean-up the gardens
- Repair or replace broken windows, jalousies, doors
- Replace school signs
- Any other types of repairs needed to be done

WHO CAN HELP?

- Parents
- Local business
- Local School Board
- Local community

WHAT RESOURCES WILL WE NEED?

- A little bit of donated materials (paint, cement, lumber, tiles and other building materials)
- A lot more volunteer TIME
- A whole lot of community spirit
- NO CASH!

HOW TO ORGANIZE THE EFFORT?

Principals and schoolheads are the key.

1. In February, organize thru the PTCA. Look at the areas within the school that the local community can repair. Make a list of what needs to be done and what materials would be needed.
2. In March, recruit parent volunteers through the PTCA. Are there parents who are carpenters, plumbers, masons, architects, engineers among school parents who could volunteer time to organize specific work teams?
3. Approach local business for donations in kind
   - Hardware stores (paint, cement, wood, nails, etc.)
   - Local restaurants (for food for work groups)
   - Local truckers (to haul materials)
   - Local business (for other materials)
4. Talk to local civic organizations and present the school maintenance plan to be done during the BRIGADA.
   - Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis Clubs, Zonta, and other clubs
   - Local industry associations
   - Local church groups
   - Local media
   - Approach the local school board or LGU for additional resources to help augment the voluntary effort.
5. In April, the Principal and the PTCA should organize the work groups.
   - Appoint teams and team leaders
   - Agree on specific tasks per team per day
   - Organize the logistics. Where will donations-in-kind be stored? When can donations-in-kind be delivered? Who will be responsible for accepting and safeguarding donations-in-kind? Who will be reponsible for ensuring that work teams properly utilize the donated materials?
6. During the NATIONAL SCHOOLS MAINTENANCE WEEK (May 16-21, 2005):
   - Document the effort: Take photographs before and after the effort.
   - On the last day, celebrate the community/bayanihan effort!
7. In October, the Department of Education will recognize the most innovative BRIGADA ESKWELA at the Educator's Congress.
   - Per region, per division
   - Per large schools and small schools

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Brigada Eskwela
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local principal.**

**Join us in getting YOUR
public school ready for
the school year 2005-2006.**

UP goes open source with Linux

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

STUDENTS of the University of the Philippines will soon see an open source program named after them.

"Iskolinux" is being developed by UP Manila's Information Management System as part of a major migration by the UP System from proprietary software to open source.

The name Iskolinux is derived from the Filipino term for UP students, "Iskolar ng Bayan."

Iskolinux is based on BeatrIX, a derivative of the Debian Linux operating system.

According to UPM information management systems chief Ariel Betan, Iskolinux was developed to replace some desktop operating systems in UP's computers. It will include desktop applications commonly used by students, employees, and faculty members, he added.

Among these open source applications are Eye of Gnome (graphics viewer), Graphical Image Manipulation Program 2 (an alternative to Adobe Photoshop), Inkscape (an alternative to Corel Draw), Gaim (an open source instant messenger), Nautilus file manager, and Mozilla Firefox Internet browser.

Betan said that they are waiting for another UP-developed version of Open Office, to be called UP Office.

Iskolinux is also being developed for installation and operation from a CD.

"It won't require too much technical know-how to install," Betan said.

UP-IMS' other plans include localizing Iskolinux with installation commands, manual and desktop environment in Filipino.

A beta version of Iskolinux can be downloaded from their development website (http://bulkan.upm.edu.ph).

"The development of Iskolinux is not strictly for UP software engineers. Students and anyone with interest can share in this endeavor," Betan said.

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  "How do we re-launch an old brand to challenge or stave off new brands?"
  "I'm a small entrepreneur. Should I be concerned about "branding"?
- Buzz Marketing
  "I've been hearing about buzz marketing a lot. How do we use it to promote our brand especially that we don't have a large A&P budget? Is this similar to the Tipping Point?"
- Cannibalization
  "Top management wants to launch a cheaper, price brand that I think will compete and cannibalize our premium brand. What should I do?"
- Careers and opportunities in marketing
- Marketing Planning & Implementation
- Marketing to the masa, middle class & rich
- New Product Ideas
- Pricing
  "We're about to increase our prices of our consumer products. What is the correct way to adjust the prices and know in advance what will be acceptable to the market without suffering a decrease in sale?"
- Product, Price, Placement, Promotions – and the four other P's of marketing

Rave Reviews:

"Dr. Ned is THE marketing guru of the Philippines!"
- Dave Valdes, Senior Vice President, Philippine Daily Inquirer

"User-friendly...describes Ned Roberto's...teaching style which he has used in the courses he has successfully taught for our clients in Indonesia, Malaysia and Taiwan. His hands on, practical approach brings benefits quickly."
-Peter Weldon, Brand Management-Global Marketing. A.C. Nielsen, Hong Kong

"Ned Roberto's expertise has been of immense value to numerous marketing executives working with me to gain a clear understanding of how marketing research can help them make their corporate goals a success."
-MalcolmKelsey, President, Pacific Dynamics Pte Ltd., Singapore

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DR. NED ROBERTO, PhD is one of Asia's leading authorities on marketing. He is a much sought after consultant, speaker, author, and educator. He has taught at De La Salle University in Manila, Northwestern University in Chicago and INSEAD in France. He was professor of International Marketing at the Asian Institute of Management for 29 years. In 1983, he received the Philippine Marketing Association's Agora Award for Marketing Education, and in 2004, he was awarded the 1st Lifetime Achievement Award as Marketing Educator by the Philippine Association of Marketing Educators.

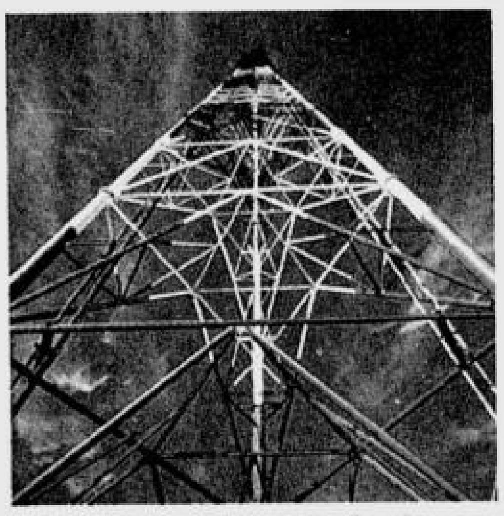
Dr. Roberto has consulted and conducted in-house seminars for Fortune 500 companies in the U.S., Europe, and Asia such as Procter & Gamble, Citibank, McCann-Erickson, Nestle, AC Nielsen, etc. He is the author (with Philip Kotler) of Social Marketing, which has been translated into seven languages, as well as the best-selling User-Friendly Marketing Research and several other books and countless papers on marketing.

Dr Roberto earned his MBA and PhD in Marketing at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business.

PDI-5-11-05

BellTel to invest $20M for expansion plans outside Metro Manila

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor


BELLTEL'S expansion includes plans for offering WiMax services

LOCAL carrier Bell Telecommunications Philippines (BellTel) is set to invest $20 million in the next two years as it expands its points of presence (POP) in 17 areas nationwide, a top executive told Infotech.

Edgardo Reyes, BellTel chair and chief executive officer, said these new investments would be in the deployment of a "high-capacity microwave" network to support the increasing demand for bandwidth from its existing enterprise customers.

The company will be increasing its network capacity and will be rolling out a fixed wireless broadband network that is a precursor to the much talked-about WiMax, short for Worldwide Inter-operability for Microwave Access.

"We're providing voice and broadband Internet through our iDSL offering (a fixed wireless network service)," the executive added.

The carrier has more than 1,000 enterprise customers in Metro Manila, Cavite and Laguna, most of them based in economic zones. Expansion will cover key cities in Luzon, Visayas, and the Mindanao.

Among the expansion areas targeted by BellTel are Rizal, Batangas, Pampanga, the Clark Special Economic Zone, Subic Bay Freeport, Baguio City and Cebu City. They are also eyeing Davao, Cagayan de Oro, and other areas in Mindanao.

Reyes says that besides wireless broadband Internet, BellTel is now providing Internet telephony services (VoIP or voice over Internet protocol) to customers using its fixed wireless network.

Its biggest customers include Wyeth, Toyota, Nissan, Mitsubishi, Hitachi, De La Salle University in Laguna, Isuzu, Honda and Fujitsu Ten.

This year it bagged deals with the Senate, Intellectual Property Office, Philippine Deposit Insurance Co., Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the GSIS Family Bank, the executive said.

"We now own 25 percent of the locators in economic zones in Laguna and Cavite," Reyes noted.

This year, in partnership with Destiny Cable, BellTel will also be rolling out its three-in-one service combining cable television, Internet, and telephony in a single service.

The company is currently conducting field tests of this three-in-one service, called IC1. It will target both residential and business users in Metro Manila.

"It is in the final stages of comprehensive field trials prior to its targeted commercial launch in the second quarter of 2005," said Carmelo Lampa Jr., BellTel's vice president for operations.

This new offering is an improvement over its two-in-one BellTel service called iCable, with cable TV and Internet. ICI will become the first cable telephony service in the Philippines once it becomes commercial, Lampa added.

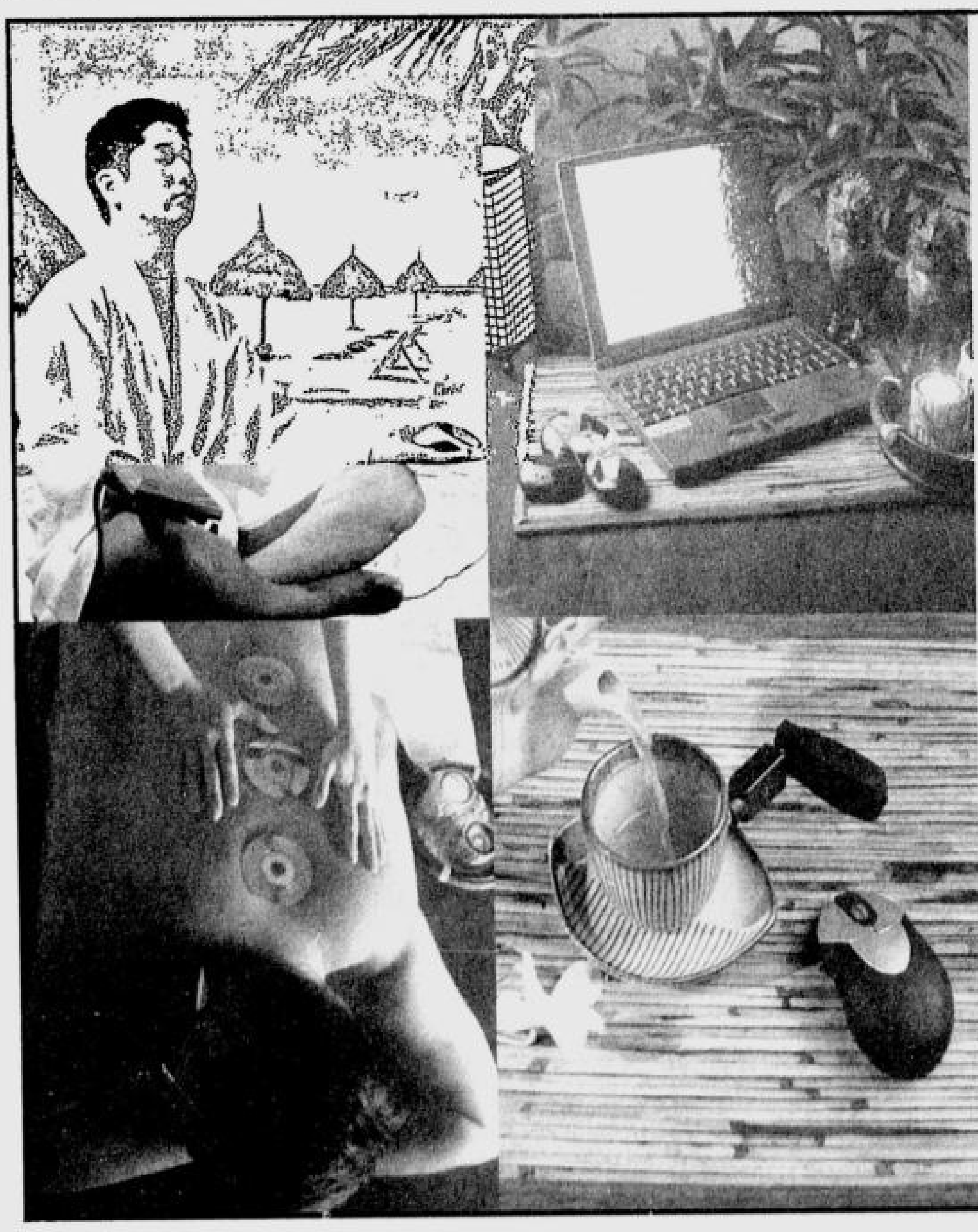
Destiny has about 550,000 "homepasses" in Metro Manila. About 180,000 are subscribers to the iCable service, Reyes said. Commercial operations of iCable began in 2003.

"Our capacity is almost sold out. So we have charted a five-year expansion plan that will translate to additional 80,000 customers," he said.

The company expects that its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) will be positive by third quarter of 2005, which means the company is already breaking even.

For the past three years, BellTel has invested more than P1 billion in capital expenditure.

"We're practically debt-free," Reyes added.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RP runs after $68-B global health and wellness market

From page B2-4

revenues in the first 10 months of 2004.

Citem said consumers' growing awareness on healthier eating habits, food safety and the ongoing debate on genetically modified organisms were nurturing the growing demand for organic food.

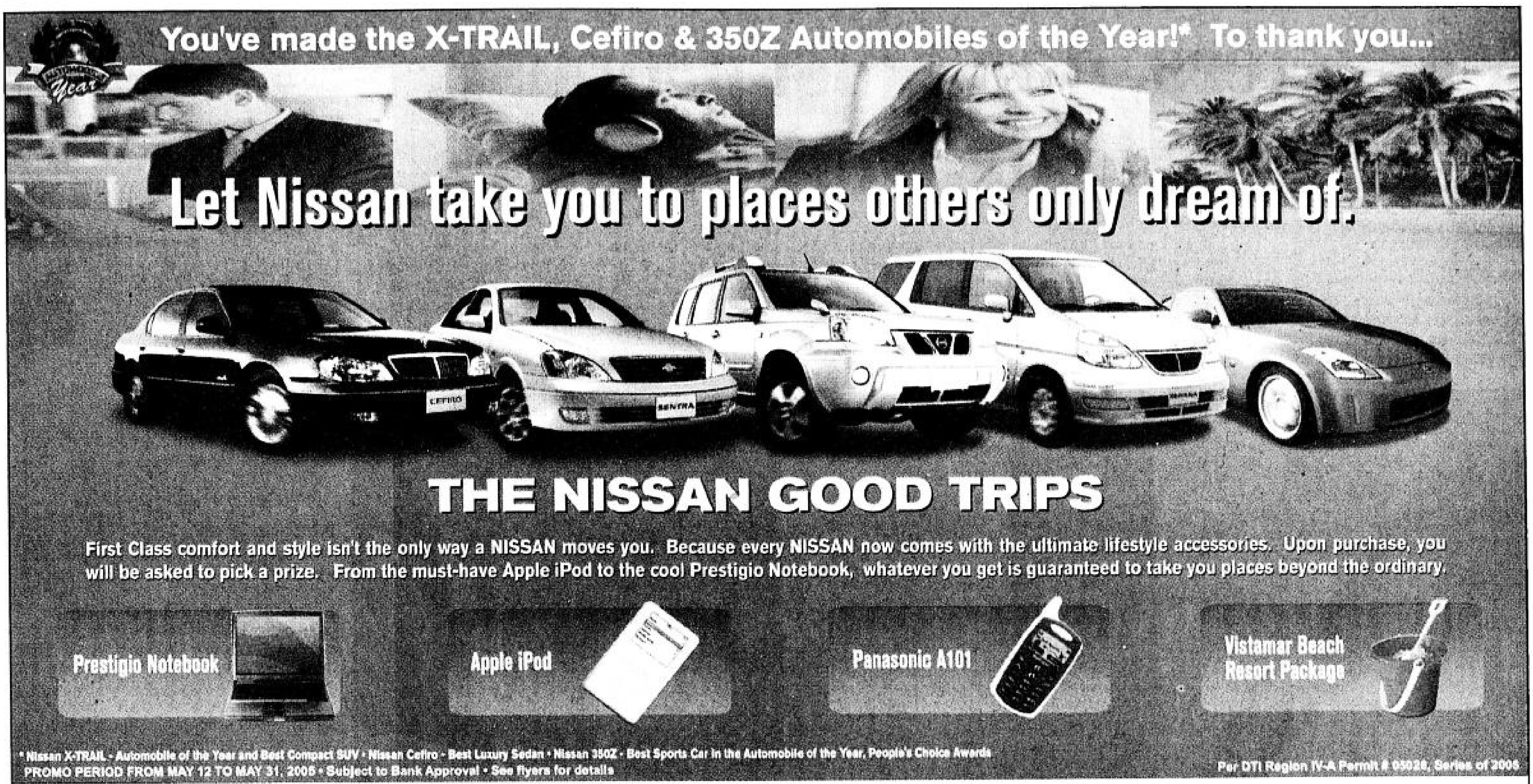
Last year, exports of organic products included muscovado sugar, green balangon (bananas), banana chips, coconut cooking oil, dessicated coconut, coconut chips, virgin coconut oil and dried banaba leaves.

Major export destinations were Japan, Europe, United States, Canada, Singapore, Australia, Korea and China.

Citem executive director Felicitas Agoncillo-Reyes had called on more producers to shift to organic farming and get into the export business considering the opportunities that abound.

The government's agenda for the sector includes shifting to organic agricultural practices; strengthening the certification of organic products; sustaining the local and international market; and increasing areas of plantation.

Citem said agricultural lands devoted to organic farming cover a total area of 11.8 million hectares or just 0.02 percent of the total. This is expected to rise to one percent of the total by 2010.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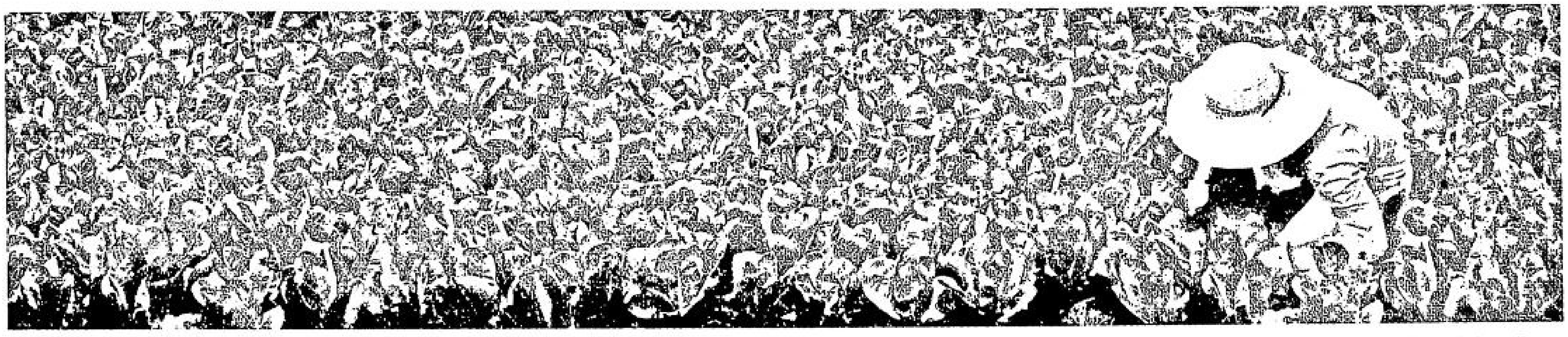

Pick n' Pay at Leisure Farms
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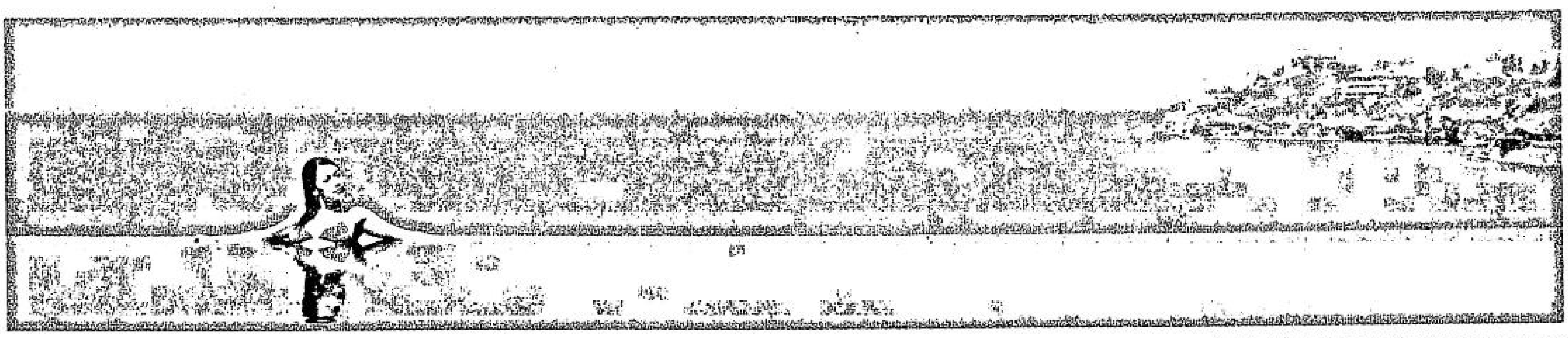

Double Infinity Pool at Peninsula de Punta Fuego
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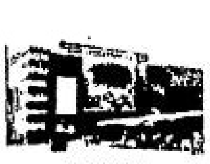
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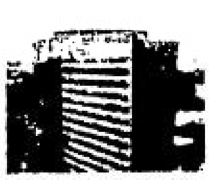
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ASIAN TRENDS

Marketers, don't just promise, learn how to deliver the goods

By Marlet D. Salazar

AT WHAT scale does the power of advertising influence the target market? Consumers are getting more discriminating these days that the challenge is to capture their interest, mind and heart.

John Lennon's "Imagine" has been immortalized in so many ways and forms. It has become a national anthem in campaigns against war.

While the idea of humor is the most often used theme in many advertisements because people remember the situation thus gives some brand recall.

Some marketing people choose to touch on the sensitive side of consumers resorting to exploring culture and heritage.

Hermawan Kartajaya explained to students of the Asian Institute of Management in a recent talk on "Asian Trends in Marketing: The Future of Asian Marketing" that "the global landscape of marketing has truly changed over the years."

Kartajaya has been named as one of the 50 gurus in the world who shaped the future of marketing. He now heads the MarkPlus & Co.

KARTAJAYA

Consumers in Asia are a particularly evolving market, said Kartajaya.

There are new realities and challenges faced by consumers in the region.

Simplicity is key

In this fast-changing world, simplicity is slowly being lost to a more complex type of marketing.

"Because of this, some people yearn for the good old days as things are becoming more and more valuable than people," he said. "Modernity is no longer about adapting the western way of things."

Kartajaya said "most Asians have that desire to become modern but," he stressed, "not necessarily to become Western because they still want to keep their identity."

The two emerging types of people (or consumers) in Asia according to the marketing guru are those who spend all their time making money and those who spend their money trying to find time.

While the consumers are becoming "wealthier," a company or the marketer still must not forget to instill value.

While the surge of choices among end-users seem not to stop, consumers face the dilemma of having lesser time to make those choices.

Although they demand more personal attention, these same people however resent intrusion.

Complaint is inevitable but there are some that can be easily satisfied.

Driving forces

The driving forces of marketing today include technology, political and legal, social and cultural, economy, market, competition, and customer.

Technology has created more transparency because it helps bridge information, knowledge and is also instrumental in wisdom sharing. The countries have become more open to other cultures and changes creating a borderless world thus reaching out to more people.

Changes drive competition making it tougher even while customers maintain their identity.

Kartajaya explained to the students of AIM the Yin and Yang of Marketing: Towards the Future of Asian Marketing.

He said that segmentation does not only include the demographic aspect of marketing but also the behavioral and what he calls "psychographic."

When identifying the target market, one has to consider not only what the mind would dictate. It is also important to ponder on how to touch their hearts and even the soul. The company must know how to allocate their resources effectively and of which segments are their priority and which of them follows.

One of the most important to note in marketing is the brand positioning, said Kartajaya. In positioning, there shouldn't be any empty promises because credibility must be kept.

He stressed that before launching any new product in the market, contemplate on its positioning seriously, as it would also define the market segment. Now is the time to touch the heart of the customers because it gives a solid reason for a product to be born, according to Kartajaya.

After the positioning follows differentiation as this is the core tactic to support it. Be sure that it is not concentrated on the content alone but also the context, again because it follows the importance of touching the customer's heart. Solid differentiation supports solid positioning, he said.

Marketers must not only make promises, they should know how to deliver.

The product, of course, is the most important in all these processes. Kartajaya pointed out that the quality of the products must be mixed with excitement and experience.

In communicating with the public, Kartajaya classified it into two: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal is the public relations side of marketing while the vertical is the advertising aspect.

A brand should not only be respected but must also be cool and charismatic as well as emphatic and passionate, Kartajaya said.

The process of marketing a brand must be done with quality, creativity and should also be participating.

Everyone in the company must be marketers, said Kartajaya.

Kartajaya summed up the Yin and Yang of marketing as having the strategy (mind share), tactic (market share), and value (heart share).

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Industry seeks clarification on Clean Air Act

WHICH is the greater good—environment protection or the preservation of industries and jobs to achieve our economic targets?

Industry believes that it can harmoniously marry both since it generates its resources from nature. In fact, companies, large and small, spend the necessary resources to comply with government environment regulations. However, ambiguities in the laws that were created to protect the environment contribute to making industry viability difficult.

This was the position reiterated by representatives from various industry sectors including the Pollution Control Association of the Philippines Inc. (PCAPI); Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. (Philexport); Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industries (PCCI); Air and Waste Management Association (Awma)-Philippine Section Inc. and the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI). They were seeking the immediate clarification of the outstanding and numerous vague provisions of the Philippine Clean Air Act (CAA) and its implementing rules and regulations.

The CAA was approved in 1999 but many provisions continue to be controversial, if not difficult to comply with because of these gray areas, according to industry players. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through its Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) is the main implementing agency of the law.

The industry groups made this urgent appeal for clarification in the recent multi-sectoral meeting with the house oversight committee on the CAA. The move came after the groups adopted a consensus on this matter during the recent annual general membership convention of the PCAPI.

While acknowledging the valuable assistance of the DENR through its EMB in crafting several issuances concerning industrial air pollution, the industry representatives noted the lack of resources of the DENR in completely setting the rules clear.

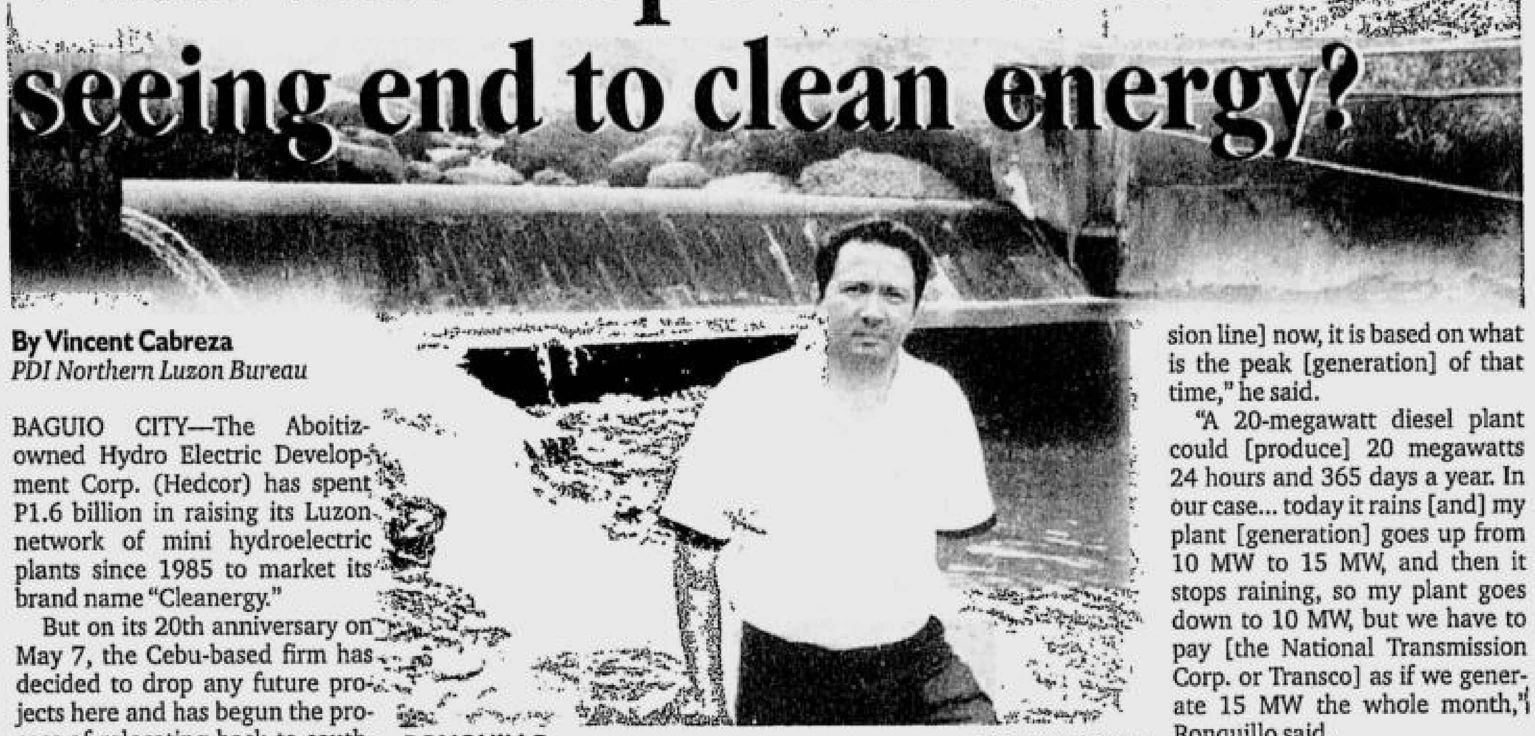
Such vague rules have therefore become the subject of discretionary interpretation by certain government environment officers during implementation.

"Horror stories vary and multiply especially from region to region where clarification from the government head office will take longer and is more difficult," said the owner of an export firm whose factory was closed due to its alleged violation of the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) System.

The worst sanction has been closure orders implemented despite incomplete case documentations or lack of due process as claimed by some of the companies affected.

Offenses allegedly cover violations against small discharge volumes such as those from small and medium enterprise (SMEs); standards for intermittent operations; rule on correction factor; rule on continuous emission monitoring system (CEMS), and standards for emitting sources with consideration of fuel quality and location of facility. Industry is also calling for clearer rules on emission averaging and emission trading under the CAA.

With VAT on power: Are we seeing end to clean energy?



RONQUILLO

PHOTOS BY EV ESPIRITU

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The Aboitiz-owned Hydro Electric Development Corp. (Hedcor) has spent P1.6 billion in raising its Luzon network of mini hydroelectric plants since 1985 to market its brand name "Cleanergy."

But on its 20th anniversary on May 7, the Cebu-based firm has decided to drop any future projects here and has begun the process of relocating back to southern Philippines.

Rene Ronquillo, Hedcor corporate operating officer, said rising taxes on power and government's lukewarm support for alternative clean power has made the market inhospitable to indigenous and sustainable energy programs.

Congress' bicameral committee has just endorsed a final draft measure for the amended value added tax (VAT) law, which no longer exempts power generation from its coverage.

Ronquillo also said the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) of 2001, does not extend tax and import incentives for a deregulated market. Despite its mandatory tax exemptions, hydroelectric plants still fail to draw market interest because clean energy is inherently more expensive than power produced by gas turbines or coal-fired plants, he said.

European countries require their power industry players to mix their power supplies with electricity produced from indigenous resources to guarantee clean energy, but Philippine energy policies are more concerned with reducing consumer costs rather than enforcing environmentally friendly power, Ronquillo said.

He acknowledged that their decision to reduce their presence in Luzon might send out mixed signals about the clean energy trade.

Without government subsidies and protection, the hydro industry has become unprofitable, he said.

Business lessons

The nature of power generation in the Philippines requires huge capital investments and low-end industries may not survive a wholesale power supply market that is designed to protect big industry consumers, Ronquillo said.

He said energy derived from natural resources is more expensive because their investors "pay for power they use and for power they do not use."

"There's one thing about run-of-river mini hydros, like ours, we are absolutely dependent on whatever amount of water that is running through the river at [any given time]... We don't have big dams that pump [out] water," Ronquillo said.

"That volume of water goes up and down. But when you pay for [power] transmission charges [the fees for allowing locally produced power to be distributed using government transmission lines], these are not based on what is going into the [transmission line] now, it is based on what is the peak [generation] of that time," he said.

"A 20-megawatt diesel plant could [produce] 20 megawatts 24 hours and 365 days a year. In our case... today it rains [and] my plant [generation] goes up from 10 MW to 15 MW, and then it stops raining, so my plant goes down to 10 MW, but we have to pay [the National Transmission Corp. or Transco] as if we generate 15 MW the whole month," Ronquillo said.

For Hedcor, these are hard business realities they need to swallow. Hedcor has grown to a P2-billion local industry, with 13 Benguet-based hydro plants and 294 employees, 86 percent of which hail from the province.

Hedcor has contributed P9.7 million in business taxes, P67.9 million in real property taxes, and P67 million in privilege taxes to government coffers for 20 years.

Benguet towns hosting Hedcor's plants have earned P66.9 million in that same period.

Israel Buenaobra, Hedcor corporate communications officer, said their firm has generated 1,717 gigawatt-hours of clean energy since 1985, "preventing the release of more than 177 million kilograms of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere [had] the same amount of energy [been] gener-

WITH VAT/ B3-3

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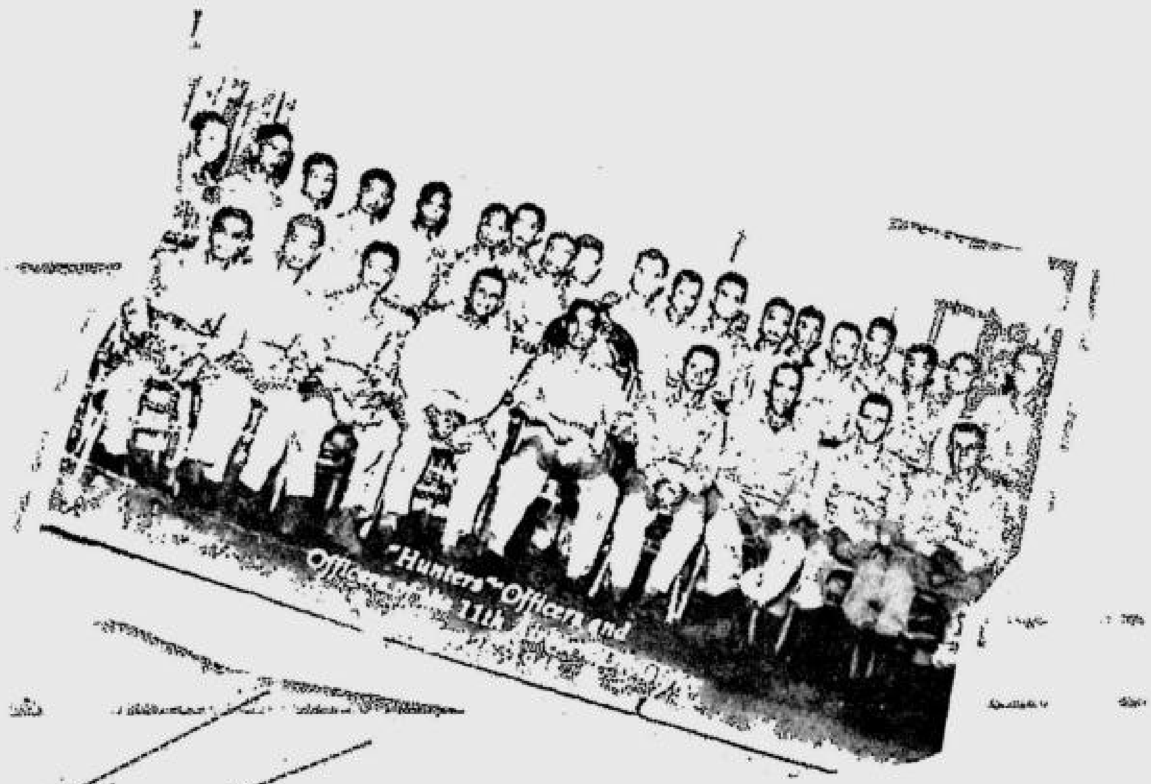

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Organic rice farmers making headway

TINAMBAC, Camarines Sur—It was founded in 1985 at the University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) as a program against the proliferation of high-yielding varieties (HYV) of rice breed that are dependent on the application of fertilizers, pesticides and other toxic chemicals.

Now, after 20 years, the Magsasaka at Siyentipiko Para sa Pag-unlad (Masipag) is now making headway in Camarines Sur province amid difficult challenges.

The Masipag was first implemented as program by a group called Multi-Sectoral Forum (MSF), a discussion group of national scientists from the UPLB who opposed the wrong directions of the government during the years under the late strongman former President Ferdinand Marcos.

Its advocates and practitioners have proliferated in most Luzon's provinces and in the Visayas and Mindanao regions even as it confronts head-on the massive effort to embrace further the use of HYV for commercial and mass production of rice.

The Masipag—now a nationwide coordinative body and network of scientists, farmers' groups and non-government organizations—blamed the Green Revolution Program of Marcos for the disappearance of some 4,000 varieties of traditional rice all over the country.

It further noted that the traditional practices that went with the propagation of traditional rice varieties also disappeared.

Edgardo SA. Callada, chair of the Tinambac Organic Farmers Association (Tofa), said the Masipag network had so far retrieved already some 600 varieties of lost traditional rice that are now circulated, shared and propagated nationwide totally without chemical or synthetic inputs.

Already in his third year of practicing the principles and technologies of traditional rice farming of Masipag, Callada now trains fellow farmers on the steps and processes of shifting to traditional rice variety production from HYV cultivation.

AMADO B. Bu smiles at the harvest from his trial propagation of a traditional rice variety.

Family cooperation

The Masipag program works within the principles of sustainable farming that are ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just and equitable, culturally sensitive, appropriate technology, holistic science and development of human potentials.

Its application of chemical- and synthetic-free farming technologies, which absolutely prohibits the use of inorganic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, works towards the maintenance of the ecological balance in the farm.

EDGARDO Callada, 3-year practitioner of Masipag farming, shows off the traditional rice variety.

The traditional rice varieties that vary from black to light yellow to golden to bright brown, and from aromatic to sticky, are put into trial propagation that requires assistance and cooperation from other traditional rice variety advocates.

Unshackled

Callada said the most visible benefit of the farmer-practitioner is his unshackling from the bondage to usurers of production capital who are usually the *comprada* (grains dealers).

With no artificial inputs required, the farmer-practitioner needs only brawn and dedication to produce more profitable and healthful harvest.

Nena keeps the record and data bank of the traditional rice grains that has grown into a 104-variety collection now labeled and kept in small brown envelopes with some extra packages for distribution.

She said the practice of keeping the traditional and organic farming technology involves even the small kids in their home with each of them tending one or two varieties for drying.

Callada said they produce their own organic inputs that include compost (aged mixture of the leaves of acacia, madre de cacao, rice straws and manure) and foliar (aged concoction of brown sugar and *kangkong* (swamp cabbage).

He said maintaining the water involves cyclical days of watering and emptying the rice farm. Each traditional variety has its own

ORGANIC/B4

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With VAT on power: Are we...

From page B3-1

ated by a coal-fired plant."

"This resulted [in] foreign exchange savings of over P8.5 billion for the country through the displacement of about 482 million liters of oil," he said.

Proximity to a buyer would have supported Luzon hydros but with new taxes facing the trade, and with provinces still reliant on rural power cooperatives, alternative energy still has no viable customers in Luzon, Ronquillo said.

"We are going back to Mindanao [because] the Department of Energy recognizes that there is an impending power crisis [there] and Hedcor is committed to serving the franchise areas of Davao Light [another Aboitiz-owned power company]," he said.

Ronquillo said Mindanao is a frontier for power generation because both government and commercial investments are pouring toward southern Philippines.

"We're going back to Mindanao, but we're not building in Agusan, or in Bukidnon, or Zamboanga. We are building close Davao Light and Power Co. [in Davao City] where we can build a transmission line [linked to Davao Light]. In that way we don't have to pay for transmission line costs," he said.

Interest in clean energy

But Hedcor is dropping future hydroelectric projects in a region that is now on the brink of pushing its own clean energy agenda, due largely to the firm's legacy.

The Cordillera Regional Development Council has defined the region as a watershed cradle for Luzon, and has identified power generation among its core potential industries.

A masteral study prepared by one of the country's first two mountain engineering graduates proposes a series of mini hydro plants, as well as solar and wind-generating plants, that will power up the Cordillera outside the established power grids of the Transco.

Janice Kaye Lacsamana, one of two civil engineers to graduate this year from three Baguio universities sharing the first mountain engineering course, pointed out in her study that the region has "very good solar, water and wind energy potentials," and "stand alone mini power grids" are often better options to light up mountain communities because "extending central power grids to scattered mountain communities is... expensive."

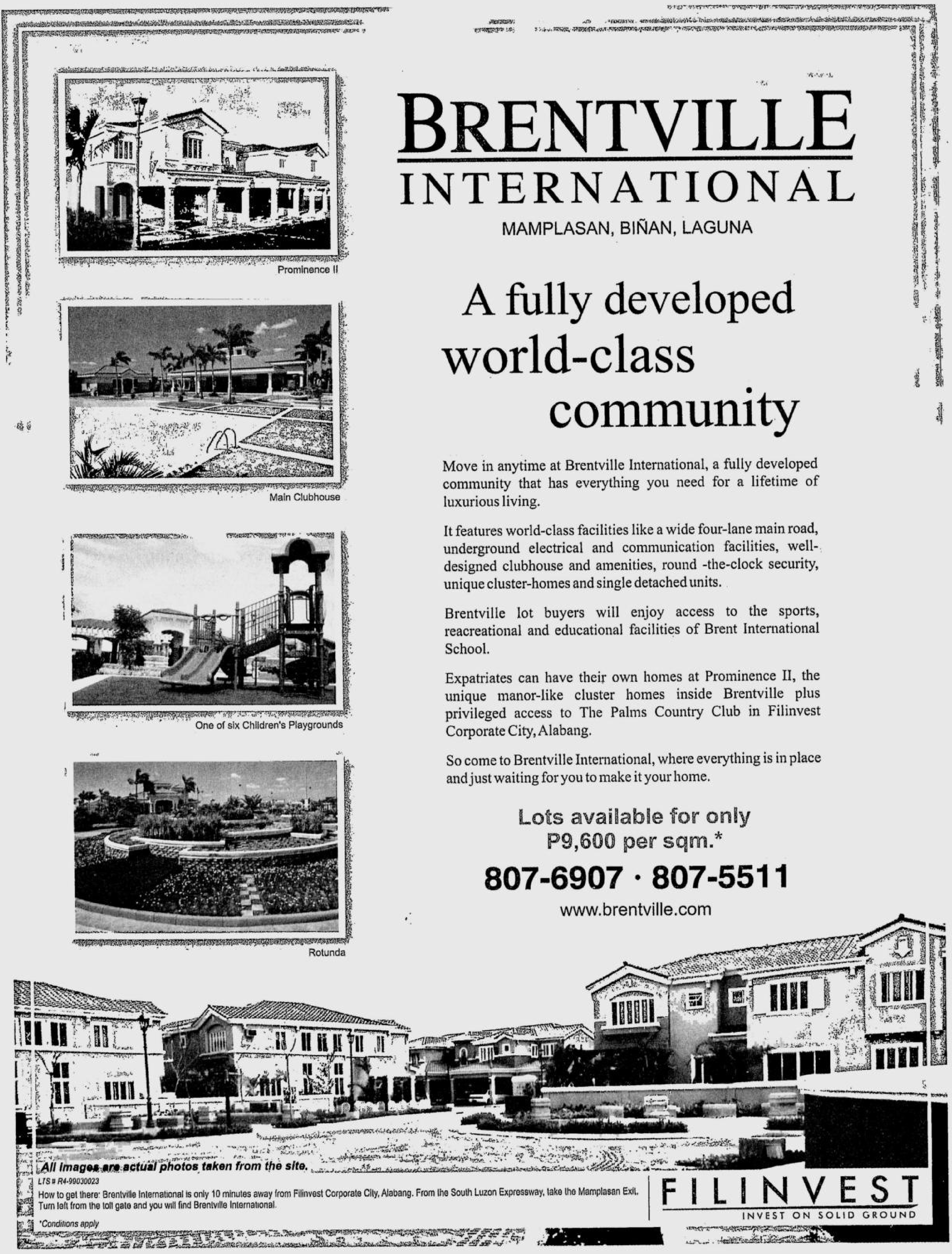
Even Ifugao, one of the poorest provinces in the country, has decided to push for energy generating plants as a means of outpacing its gradually increasing poverty incidence, according to Leon Dacanay, Cordillera assistant director of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Heeding a request by former Ifugao Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr., Japanese experts have surveyed the strengths and weaknesses of the river systems in Ifugao, Dacanay said.

Ronquillo said these local initiatives might find their crusades hampered by government indifference, now that VAT has further reduced the options for alternative power generation.

But with growing numbers of local governments fighting to run their own power generation, they may yet institutionalize "Cleanergy," he said.

HYDRO Electric Development Corporation chief operating officer Rene Ronquillo shows off part of the assets of the Aboitiz-owned firm



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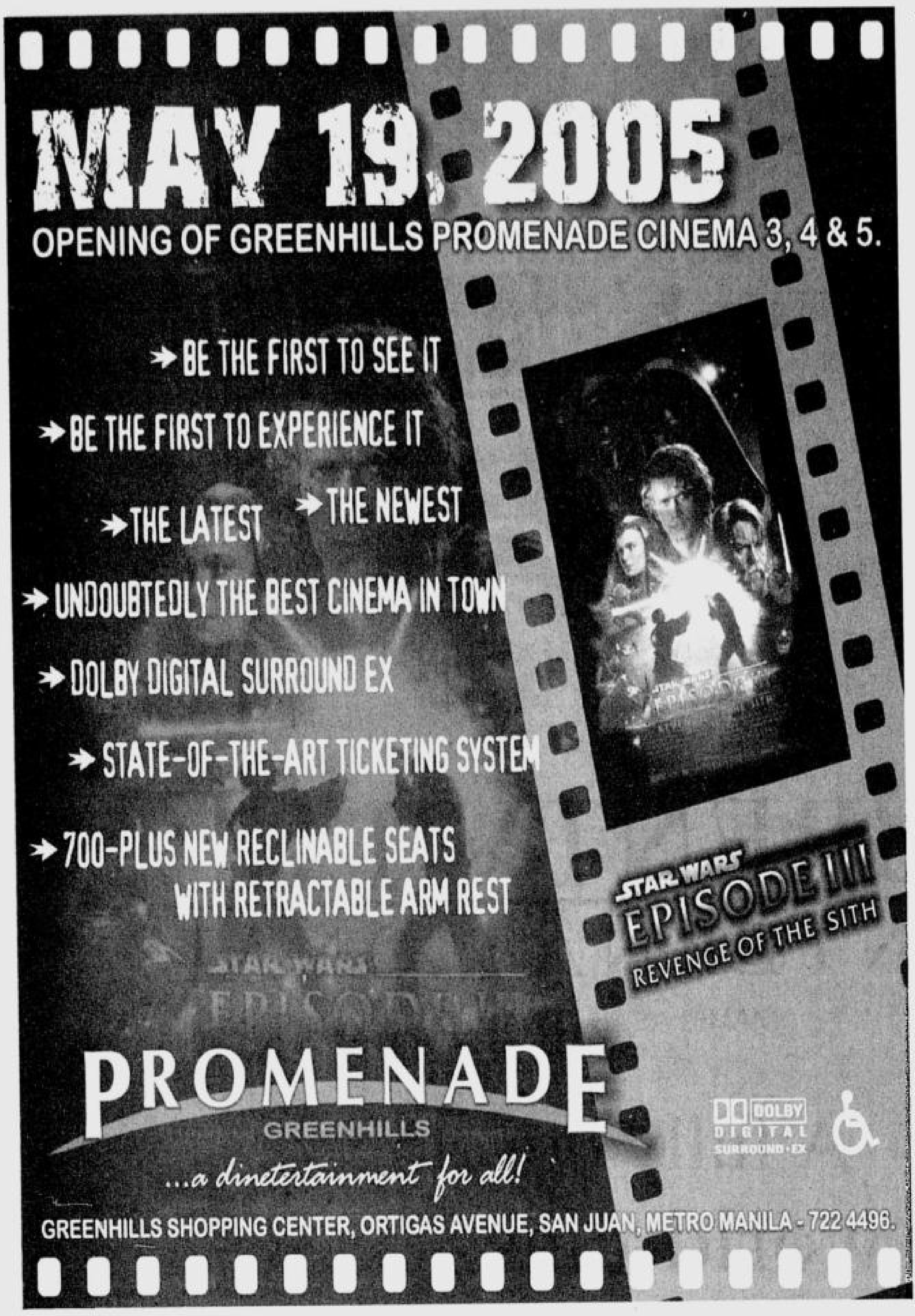
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Big IT firms scouting for sites in provinces

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MORE and more information-technology enabled service (ITES) firms are putting up shop due to the rising perception of the country's competitiveness in outsourced services.

A result of this is the decreasing supply of office space and facilities geared up for such technology-dependent operations, and so the government has urged ITES firms to consider locating outside Metro Manila.

Alternative sites presented include the Leyte, Iloilo, Baguio City, Pangasinan, Camarines Sur, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Zamboanga and General Santos City.

A number of firms have answered the call by setting up business centers in Davao City and Clarkfield in Pampanga.

The move away from the national capital can still be described as a "trickle" but the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry wants to see it as an "inflow." The group is promoting the island as another global IT hub rather than simply an alternative site within the country.

For this, CCCI is hosting a three-day international conference and exhibition on ITES, where key players in the global industry are expected to converge on June 22 to 24.

Called Cebu ICT 2005, the event will be held at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug town in time with the Cebu Business Month, a yearly trade and industry festival that attracts entrepreneurs, local and foreign investors, tourists, local and national government executives.

Organized in cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry and the Board of Investments, Cebu ICT 2005 aims at addressing issues related to "Asia's emerging role as a global enter for information and communications technology and IT-enabled services."

Bonifacio Belen, Cebu ICT 2005 chair, said the trade show would showcase the products and services of global, regional, and local ICT and ITES providers, contractors and support industries.

Senior IT and ITES executives from Asia, the United States and Europe are expected to take part while invited resource speakers include experts from some of the world's most respected ICT and ITES organizations.

Belen said business matching sessions will also be held to facilitate networking among participants and assist buyers in identifying vendors that meet their specific business requirements.

According to CCCI, Cebu took first serious notice of its competitive advantages in ICT during the Cebu IT Summit in March 2001 which gathered at least 500 ICT practitioners and professionals from Cebu, Manila and other parts of the country, as well as those in the academe, government and nongovernment groups.

The summit made Cebu business and government leaders realize that the province could be an earnest contender for the title of ICT software and e-services hub in the Southeast Asia.

"Taking off from the accomplishments and action plans provided by the summit, Cebu amplified such realizations with the substantial growth in its ICT sector in the past three years," CCCI added.

"That the Philippines, in general, and Cebu, in particular, is poised for such growth in ICT is one of the 'best kept secrets' in the global ICT industry," CCCI said.

The group hopes that Cebu ICT 2005 would "multiply this potential a hundredfold, with a twin thrust of making worldwide ICT leaders discover and directly experience the makings of Cebu as a premier ICT investment, software and e-services hub."

Organic rice farmers ...

From page B2

appropriate pattern.

With a family of six, Callada has more than enough whole-year-round supply of chemical-free traditional rice from the harvest in his 2,500-square-meter farm and residential lot along the highway going to Naga City.

He said that from time to time, he would sell one or two sacks of the chemical-free traditional rice to friends when he is in dire need of cash.

It fetches from P1,200 to P1,500 per sack, depending on the variety.

Usually, Callada said, aromatic and colorful varieties are more expensive than the plain-grained traditional rice varieties.

He said he was continuously relieved of the burden of paying debts invested in the production of HYV after three years practicing the traditional and organic rice farming. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Hotel launches online professional training

SHANGRI-LA Hotels and Resorts, Asia Pacific's leading luxury hotel group, is joining with eCornell training program for the first time to launch e-learning courses for the company's management staff. Three thousand spaces will be offered over the next five years for online professional development in hospitality.

An eCornell certificate will be awarded to those completing any of the 57 online courses in five areas: human resources management; management essentials; hospitality and food service management; strategic management and financial management. A Cornell university certificate will be awarded to an individual after completion of a series of related courses.

"This e-learning program will provide a platform for our employees to expand their knowledge base with a high degree of time flexibility," said Giovanni Angelini, chief executive officer and managing director. "Such a commitment to staff development is critical, given our rapid worldwide expansion plans."

The group has over 20 projects under development in Canada, mainland China, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

Hong Kong-based Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts currently manages 46 hotels under the Shangri-La and Traders Hotels brands, in Australia, mainland China, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan and the United Arab Emirates with a rooms inventory of over 21,000. For more information or reservations, please contact a travel professional or access the website at www.shangri-la.com.

New tools for execs

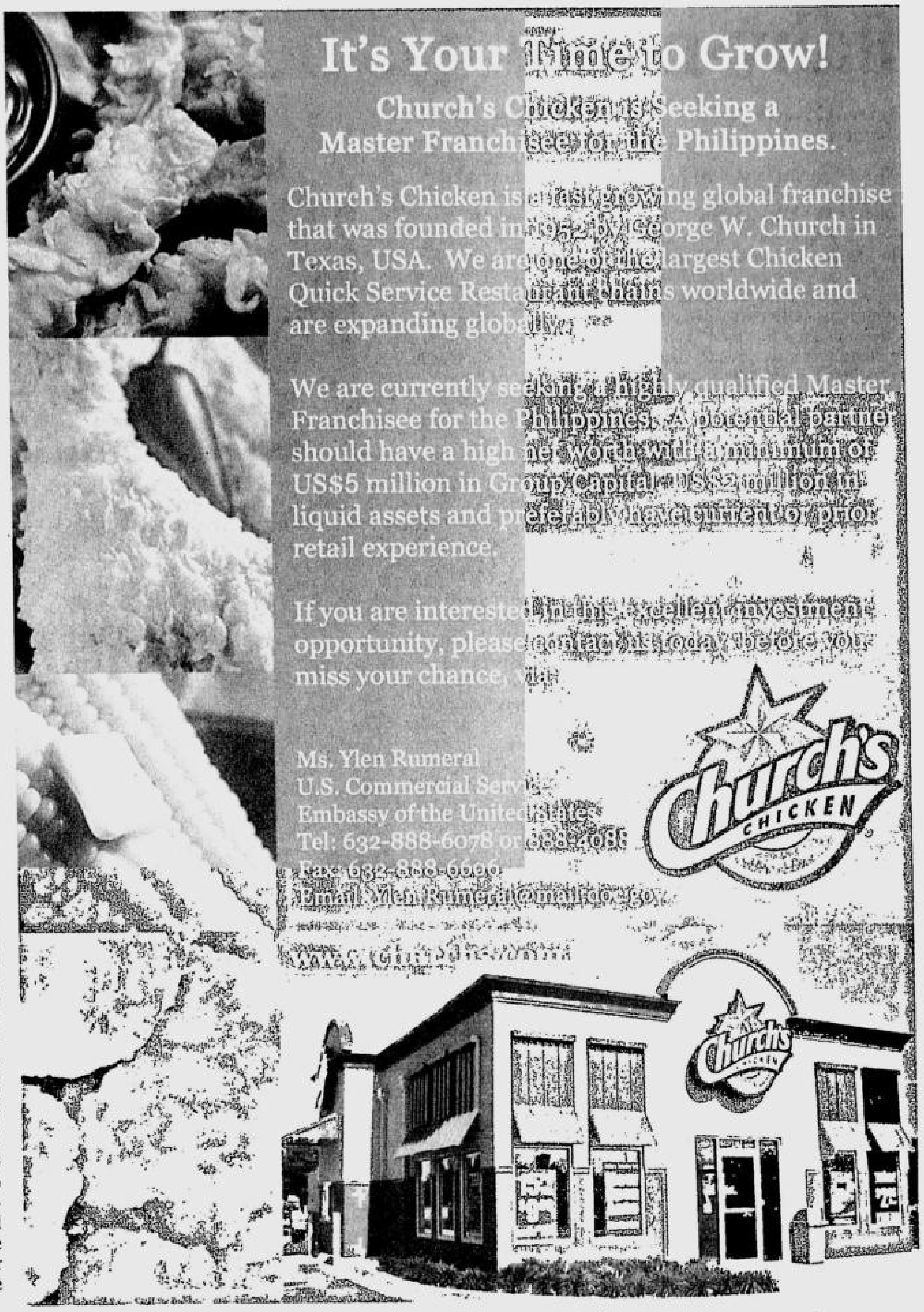
THE SWISS Army Knife, the most popular and useful multi-tool from Victorinox, has been of service to countless individuals, including executives, during emergency situations with its numerous tools and implements. Now, the Swiss Army Knife has become even better with advancements in technology and design.

Victorinox recently launched new Swiss Army Knife models with a handy illumination function that utilizes a battery-powered, white LED or light emitting diode. Called the Lite series, these Swiss Army Knives provide a convenient and powerful light source that is perfect for everyday situations like finding your car keys at night or searching nooks and crannies around your home. It is important as well in serious emergencies during such activities as outdoor camping or mountain climbing. Compared to previous models that employed an LED with red light, the new Lite series features an improved white LED that provides stronger, clearer, and more reliable illumination.

The most basic model is the Spartan Lite, which features the 12 standard Swiss Army Knife tools (large and small blades, corkscrew, can opener, small screwdriver, bottle opener with screwdriver and wire stripper, reamer and punch, key ring, tweezers and toothpick) plus a Philips screwdriver and white LED. Both street smart handymen and even housewives alike would find the Spartan Lite truly practical in dealing with the littlest problems in and around the home, such as minor appliance or automotive repairs. You will also no longer be caught unprepared during pesky blackouts or power outages, wherever you may be in your house or workplace.

For computer, gaming and hobby enthusiasts, there is also the CyberTool Lite. This handy pocket tool packs a total of 36 compact tools, including 13 different types of screwdrivers, a magnifying glass, and a white LED that focuses in the same direction as the bit wrench when opened. It is perfect for detailed repair of such items as computers, laptops, miniature models, remote-control cars or boats, and finely detailed artwork and crafts. The CyberTool Lite lends you extra precision and control in these instances.

Another new item from the Lite series is Huntsman Lite, an all-purpose knife with integrated LED light. It features other tools such as scissors, a multi-purpose hook, and a wood saw for a total of 21 tools, also including stainless steel pin and ballpoint pen. The Voyager Lite, meanwhile, is the most replete companion for the serious adventurer. Apart from the standard tools, it has a digital clock, alarm, and timer for convenient tracking of time and other natural elements. It also boasts of a white LED integrated in its stainless steel body. The Voyager Lite weighs only a little over 100 grams—such a nifty implement that takes up minimal space in your luggage or backpack despite its being packed with versatile tools and features. These sturdier and more extensive Swiss Army Knives are truly indispensable for the outdoorsman and nature lover who face more difficult tasks in the wilderness.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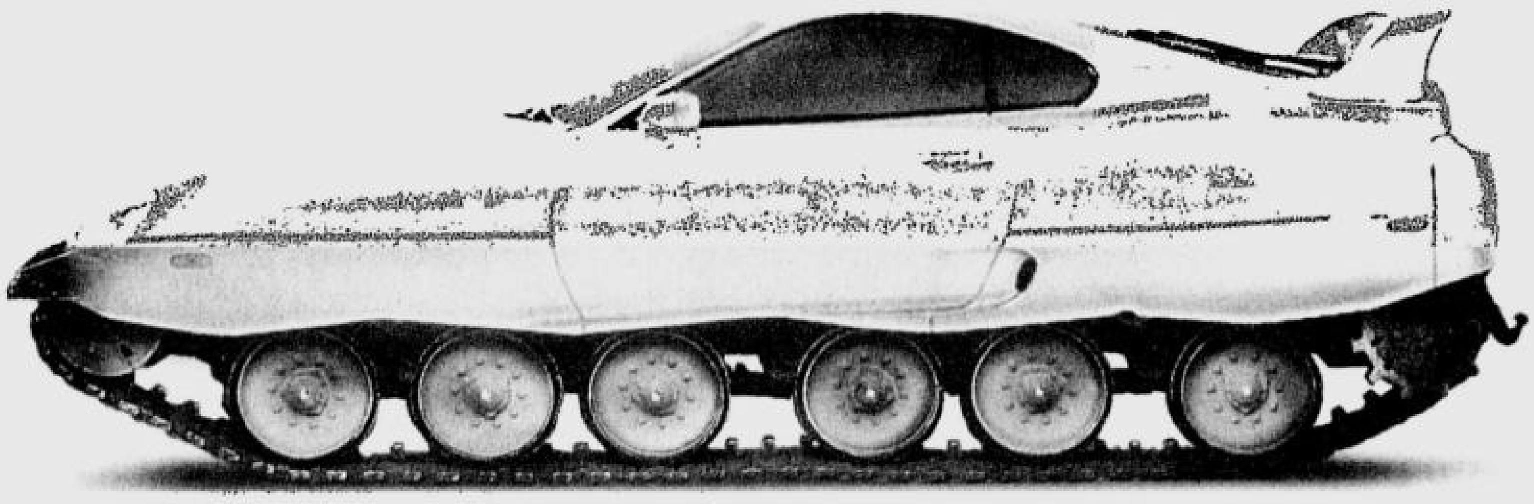

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Baby-making is becoming big business in RP

By Leah C. Salterio
Contributor

WHEN the first test tube baby was born through in-vitro fertilization (IVF) 27 years ago in London, the whole world marveled at the wonders of modern scientific technology. Today, this groundbreaking technique has become a common procedure worldwide.

Records show that more than a million births worldwide have been done through IVF. And with a success rate of as high as 40 percent, IVF is turning out to be a sought-after method in having a baby—at least to those who can afford it even here in the Philippines.

Six years ago, OB gynecologist Greg Pastorfide, led a team of local medical experts to put up the IVF center to service infertile couples.

The Victory ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) Laboratory, originally in San Juan moved two years ago to its P30 million clinic at the Medical Plaza Building in Makati City.

IVF is a method of assisted reproduction in which the man's sperm and the woman's egg are combined in a laboratory (petri) dish or test tube, where fertilization is made to occur.

"Using an ultrasound, a needle is inserted into the woman's ovary through the vaginal area, with the process requiring general anesthesia," Pastorfide explains. "An embryologist then identifies the eggs that can be harvested. The entire process usually takes 45 minutes to an hour. After three to five days of incubating the eggs, the resulting embryo is then transferred to the uterus to develop naturally. The process is called intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection or ICSI. I work closely with the embryologist and we know when it's ripe for 'planting' the eggs into the uterus."

First developed by British doctors Patrick C. Steptoe and Robert G. Edwards, who delivered the first "test-tube baby" in London in 1978, IVF was devised for use in cases of infertility when the woman's fallopian tubes are damaged or the man's sperm count is low. It is also now used to enable prospective parents with other reproductive problems, like inability to produce eggs, poor sperm quality or endometriosis.

Pastorfide started the practice of artificial insemination more than 20 years ago with his wife, Gina, who had a severe case of oligo amenorrhea or very irregular menstrual period. Gina was also not capable of conceiving a baby the normal way.

DRS. GINA and Greg Pastorfide

"She did not respond to ordinary fertility drugs," Pastorfide shares. "We even ordered the medicines directly from drug companies abroad. At that time, injectibles weren't popular yet and IVF was very expensive. The method was being done only in London and Belgium. I could have even brought her there. After a year and a half of treatment, we tried IVF on Gina. I was not worried that it wouldn't work."

The side effect of IVF is multiple births, according to Pastorfide. The couple has two sets of twin daughters.

Pastorfide says an infertile couple now has a 30 to 40 percent chance of having a baby after a cycle of IVF. Success rates vary and fertility is caused by a multiplicity of factors.

"It really requires expertise," maintains Pastorfide. "Since we put up the center, we've had 200 IVF patients, with 40 percent births. Our patients are mostly referrals from other doctors. We recommend medication for the first six months. If the person is not responding, we shift to another treatment. If the fallopian tubes are damaged and they can be surgically repaired, we recommend IVF. It also depends on the condition of the uterus. As long as the patient can financially afford, we will do IVF."

The woman's age is also a big factor to consider in the success of IVF, according to Pastorfide. If the mother is under 35, the chance of a baby per cycle may be more than 40 percent. For women above 35, the reproductive potential drops down considerably.

An average IVF process costs P250,000 to P300,000. Injectibles for 10 days cost at least P100,000 or depending on the requirements of a patient. Older ones require higher dose of as much as 10 ampules a day. At P4,000 each ampule, the cost can balloon to P400,000 for 10 days.

Pastorfide acts as the center's medical director on a team of seven OB-gyne experts and a Singaporean embryologist who studied and trained in London and previously practiced in Hong Kong.

With the IVF procedure done in the Philippines, the patient does not have to go abroad for a more expensive treatment. "You can save as much as half of the expenses that you will incur when you do it abroad, since you don't have to spend for your plane fare and accommodation," Pastorfide says.

Inevitably, legal issues were raised with IVF, like surrogate motherhood and unknown sperm donors.

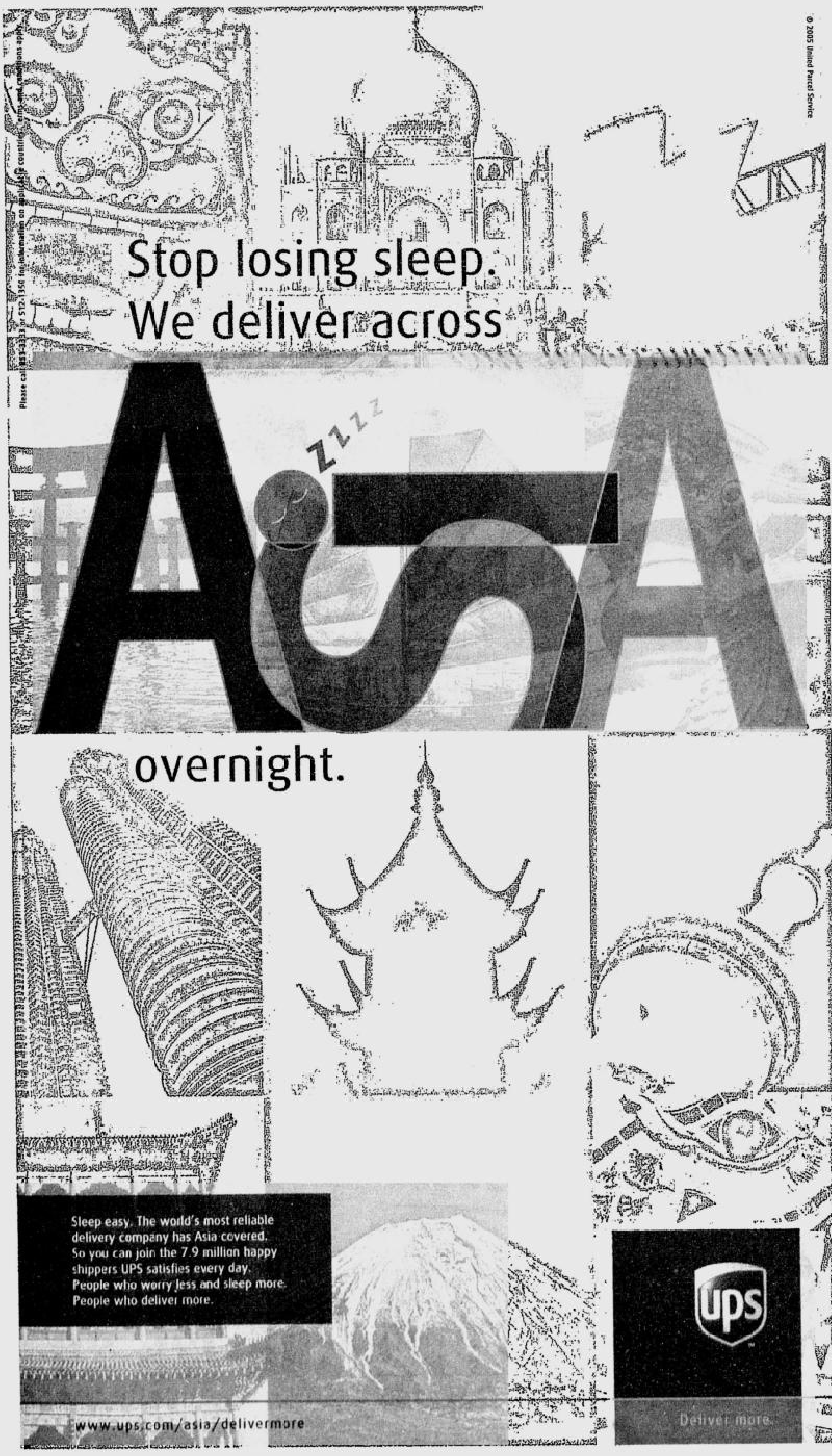
Critics also decry the practice as a perversion of science or pointing to the possible abuse of the process. And even religious groups have raised the strongest objection to artificial insemination, considering the Philippines as a predominantly Catholic country.

"Our center sticks to the policies of the Catholic church," Pastorfide said. "We resort to IVF only when all other methods to conceive a child proved futile or traditional fertility done through natural intercourse is not really possible. We also do pre- and post-treatment counseling, which I believe is very important."

(Ed's note: The Catholic Church's stand on IVF and other methods of fertilization is contained in the document called Donum Vitae which principally disallows any artificial means of getting pregnant.)

Pastorfide finished medicine from UP, and got post-graduate training at Massachusetts General Hospital. He also trained at Harvard University. Among his patients are celebrities, although most women did not rely on the IVF method to get pregnant. Among them are Sharon Cuneta, Imee Marcos-Manotoc, Charlene Gonzales, Jessica Rodriguez, Angela Arroyo, Gretchen Barretto, Cristina Gonzales-Romualdez.

(Call 884-2290 to 92 for more information.)



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Creating more value through IT, governance

CONFORMITY to regulatory policies has always been an integral part of any well-run business.

The primary role of an astute professional of any given company is to build reliable, repeatable compliance processes that trade the time spent on fiduciary duties for the time spent creating value for the organization.

This is especially critical with the need of enterprises to comply with international regulatory policies, such as the Sarbanes-Oaxley Act that requires company executives to certify the accuracy and legitimacy of corporate financial statements and national requirements for transparency in business practices.

Many companies are under pressure to develop and introduce codes of conduct that will enable their day-to-day decision making processes to adhere to compliance standards.

If implemented correctly, these codes of conduct will allow companies to achieve such goals—and more.

Corporate responsibility

A study made by the Economist Intelligence Unit, produced in cooperation with Oracle Corp., shows that more business executives and corporate investors are factoring corporate responsibility into their decision-making.

The study also showed that the three most important aspects of corporate responsibility for the executives were ethical staff behavior, transparency and good corporate governance.

Corporate governance allows the board of directors of a company to direct, manage and control the operations of the business within the framework of effective accountability.

In turn, this protects, enhances and realizes the interests not only of company shareholders, but also a much broader set of stakeholders including customers, employees, suppliers and wider community.

Corporate governance likewise develops new competencies, because it engages all members of a given organization, calls for a forward-thinking managerial style and leaves responsible firms better prepared for external changes, turbulence and crises, and above all, builds reputation.

This means that corporate governance is critical to the success of any business because it has much to do with executive responsibility.

In fact, companies today deal with vast information flows, and many of them are large, diversified multinationals that are subject to a lot of regulations.

These companies also need to increasingly satisfy demanding and discriminating customers that require them to collect, process and manage enormous volumes of customer information.

With information as the critical foundation of modern businesses, executive oversight can only be as effective as the quality and timeliness of the information they receive about their business, and what control they exert over complex business processes and information networks.

IT and governance

This is where IT and corporate governance meet.

The cornerstones of managing complex, information-driven businesses are automation and enterprise information systems.

These systems are keys to effective corporate governance in the modern business—they alone cannot guarantee good governance, but these business systems provide vital help to evaluating and addressing corporate governance challenges faced by the modern executive.

A successful business system should be able to provide key components necessary in making corporate governance happen. These components should allow visibility on timely and relevant information, control in implementing strategies and efficiency that will allow accomplishment of visibility and control.

By taking this integrated approach to compliance risk and performance management, a company can increase the return it receives from its compliance spending.

Oracle offers mature, market-leading solutions for governance and compliance that are based on its unique information architecture—a single, unified data model that stores information across a full range of applications and an integrated reporting infrastructure that lowers costs and minimizes the chance of data errors.

Corporate governance

In the Philippines, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in April 2002 issued Memorandum Circular 2 requiring all listed corporations to submit their corporate governance code by July 2002.

In its memorandum circular, SEC also required the companies to begin complying with their respective codes by Jan. 1, 2003.

This SEC order aimed to ensure that all listed companies institutionalize leading practices in corporate governance to prevent business losses, boost investor confidence, and attract more investments in the economy.

In this line, companies have started implementing business processes and solutions that would help them comply with such mandates.

Indeed, CEOs and entrepreneurs make decisions based on the amount, timing and quality of information made available to them through a reliable IT infrastructure.

This in place, compliance and corporate governance initiatives can benefit the company's bottom line. *Yashi Kant, managing director, Oracle Philippines Corp.*

Taiwan's dive market seen to boast Albay's eco-tourism

LEGAZPI CITY—A leading Taiwanese scuba diving firm recently expressed its strong support for the Albay province as its "pilot area" for scuba diving explorations.

Good Morning Travel Service Co. Ltd. of Taiwan also assured assistance to the local government unit of Legazpi City and the Bicol Scuba Divers Foundation Inc. (BSDFI) in their joint sustainable program to save almost 90 percent of the marine reefs in the province that have been affected by massive dynamite and cyanide fishing during the last decade.

Gerard Panga, Manila Economic and Cultural Office of the Philippines tourism attaché based in Taiwan, disclosed to the INQUIRER the decision of Tom Chu, chair of Good Morning Travel, Taiwan's leading scuba diving firm and leisure and business trips agency, to encourage most of their clients and scuba diving enthusiasts under his company to come to Albay to witness and experience its diverse marine ecosystems.

Dive marketing, he said, is a new trend in the scuba diving business.

In the case of this city, the LGU and the BSDFI are pushing for a special package to boast eco-tourism and support the sustainable environmental programs of the city, aside from the usual scuba diving experiences and explorations.

Panga added that it was not surprising anymore to have this development.

He said dive market has a promising prospect in Albay owing to the presence of marine reefs that have been considered still unexplored by scuba divers.

"There are at least four other leading Taiwan's scuba diving firms that have shown interest in the dive sites here in Albay," Panga said.

BSDFI chair Jory Los Baños added that aside from boasting the eco-tourism of Albay, the plan of Good Morning Travel would encourage local fisherfolk to abandon illegal fishing and instead help in the conservation of coral reefs in the region.

Legazpi Mayor Noel Rosal said the very reason why the Taiwanese diving enthusiasts are very interested in and supportive of their program is primarily because they can see and feel the sincerity of the local government, in coordination with environmental groups, in protecting and conserving the rich and diverse marine reefs in Albay.

Based on the report of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office based in Taiwan, there were 115,000 Taiwanese who visit the Philippines every year for leisure and travel.

"Just imagine now how the said figures will increase since Taiwanese diving enthusiasts have chosen our country in spite of the travel advisory and effects of tsunami that hit most of the Southeast Asian countries," Panga confidently said.

Chu told the INQUIRER that based on their research, they had found out that the Philippines has the most beautiful and strategic marine ecosystems in Asia, which is perfect for scuba diving explorations and monitoring.

"We're here also to experience and monitor the activities of manta rays at Ticao, Masbate, and the *butanding* (whale sharks) in Donsol, Sorsogon. And of course to tap or train local folk in the art of scuba diving," the Good Morning Travel president said. *Gil Francis G. Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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PHILAM PLANS to pay P574 million in benefits in '05!

Philam Plans, the country's leading pre-need company, fulfills its commitment to its valued planholders!

A grand total of P574 million in cash benefits will be paid out by Philam Plans this year to the delight of thousands of parents, who all dream of a guaranteed education for their children, and thousands other Filipinos, who all sought a comfortable future for themselves and their families.

The first tranche of P89 million in education benefits is being paid to more than 8,000 students all over the country since April 30. Philam Plans issues manager's checks, which is as good as cash, to ensure the complete peace of mind of its beloved planholders.

Philam Plans is likewise set to provide the security of its over 3,000 pension planholders, who will receive a total of P362 million in pension benefits this year.

As the leading pre-need company that enjoys financial strength and stability, Philam Plans provides the much-needed financial liquidity and peace of mind during these difficult and trying times.

Largest Trust Fund

Philam Plans is proud of its P15.3 billion trust fund as of March 2005, the largest in the industry to date. Its trust fund investment portfolio is highly liquid–ensuring the company the flexibility to meet any and all eventualities. The fund is put under safe and liquid investments such as government securities and near cash investments that guarantees substantial long-term yields, allowing Philam Plans to fulfill all its current and future commitments.

Trust fund represents the future benefit obligations of Philam Plans to its planholders as specified in their plan contracts.

The Most Trusted Name in Pre-Need

Philam Plans draws its strength from its mother company Philamlife, the undisputed leader in insurance in the country. It carries the Philam name, which for almost 60 years has connoted stability, strength and unbroken commitment to its customers and the public at large.

The company is fully compliant with the regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission as well as the stringent international standards set by Philamlife.

From all walks of life, all over the country, Philam is the name that Filipinos trust wholeheartedly.

Fulfilled Promises

Now in its 16th year of serving the pre-need requirements of Filipinos, Philam Plans continues to stand by its unblemished record of keeping and fulfilling its promises to planholders–the cornerstone of its business.

Professionally run and quality driven, Philam Plans seeks to become the standard of excellence and integrity in pre-need by constantly improving its services.

Today, Philam Plans continues to reach out to more Filipinos through innovative and best-selling pre-need products with superior features and benefits such as the Future Fund pension plans, the Gold education plans and the Ultima life plans. Its new affordable products in pension, Pangarap, and education, Pangako, provide the same security of benefits but at a cost within reach of most Filipinos.

Sa Philam Plans, Panatag ka. Noon, ngayon at sa hinaharap.

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Sigurado. Ang Philam Plans ay suportado ng **Philam Life**, ang No. 1 insurance company sa Pilipinas, at **AIG**, isa sa pinakamalaking financial services company sa buong mundo! Ito ang pangako sa pamilya mo ng PHILAM PLANS. Para makasiguro ka sa edukasyon ng anak mo, **tumawag agad sa 5285-2001**

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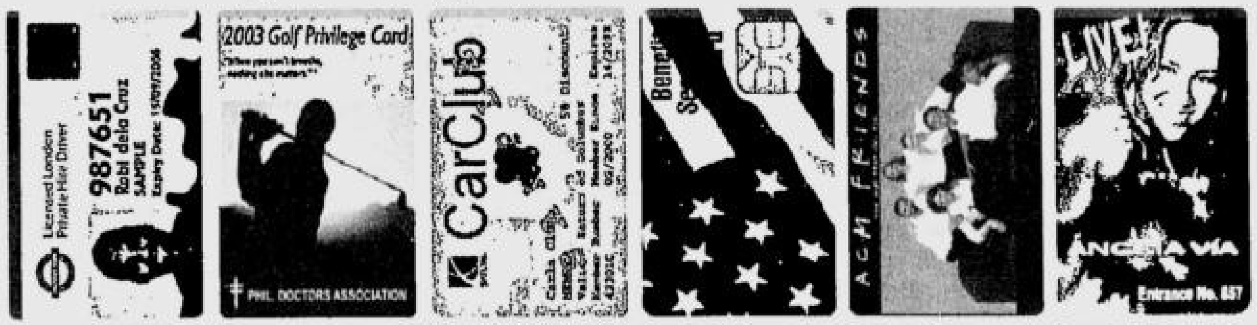

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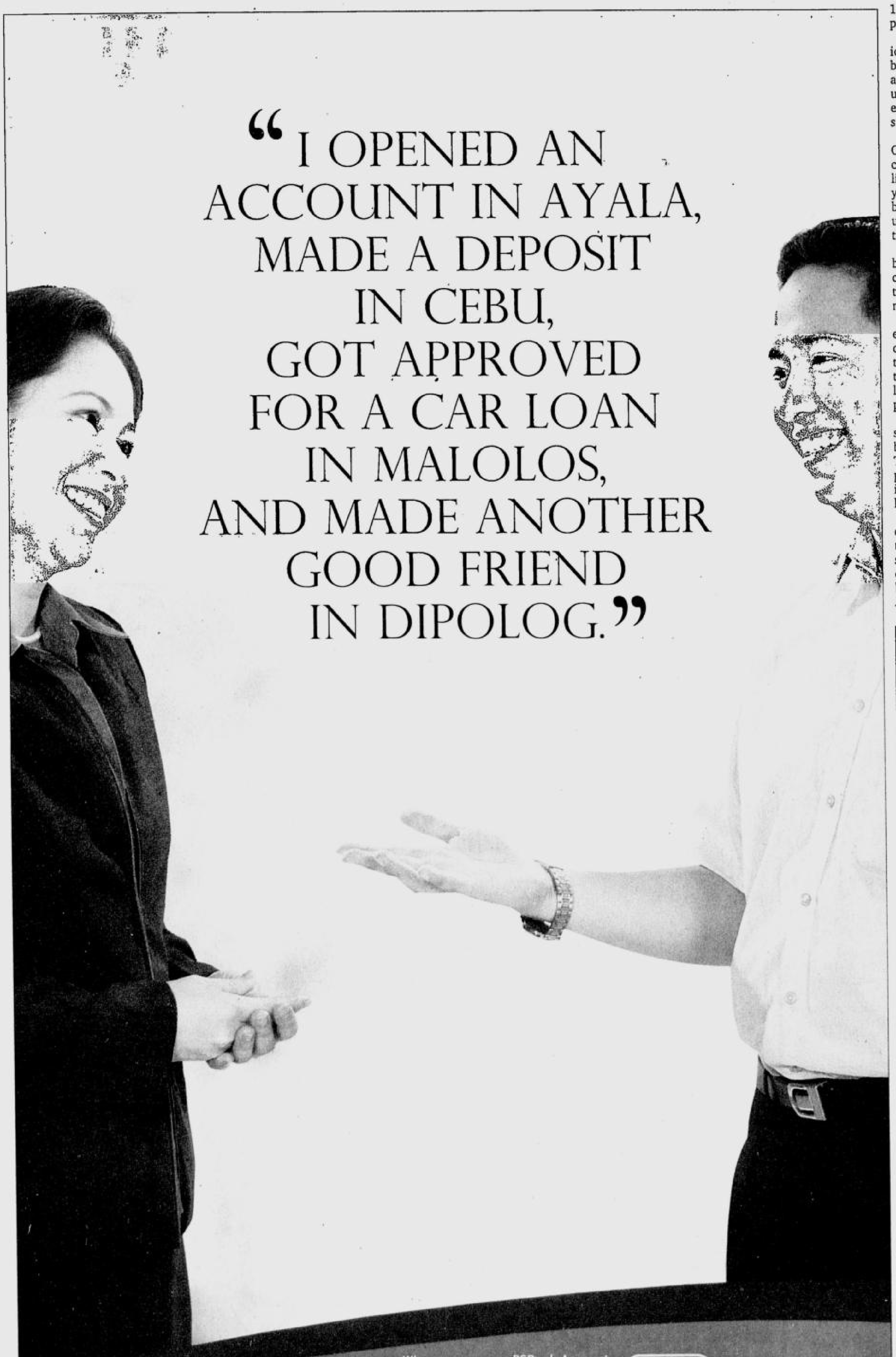
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Call centers and OFWs fuel building boom–PCCI

A RESURGENT construction and real estate development industry is being fueled by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) buying homes and call centers gobbling up office spaces.

This was the observation made by Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and Export and Industry Bank chair Sergio R. Ortiz-Luis Jr. in his talk before leaders of the National Real Estate Association (NREA) the other day.

Although the construction upsurge has not been as spectacular as the frenzied building of skyscrapers during the Ramos administration, it made a strong showing last year by combining with manufacturing to contribute 1.77 percent of the 6.1 percent gross domestic product.

With the higher than expected economic growth last year, the year 2005 should be one of hope that alas, the economy is again on the roll, Ortiz-Luis observed. But uncertainty over the finances of the government has created a climate of gloom instead.

He projected that hefty remittances of OFWs will sustain the demand for middle class housing units this year and the next. He likewise foresaw that between now and next year, spaces in overbuilt office condominium buildings during the Ramos years may get saturated by call centers that are gobbling up entire floors.

This will trigger off the need for more office buildings in Metro Manila and other urban centers that have been attracting multinational call centers and other information technology-enabled services.

He further said that real estate developers should find opportunity of buying cheap real estate properties from the banks that have been ordered by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to get rid of their billions and billions of pesos worth of idle properties.

The banks are now on a real estate selling spree at a discount of 15 to 20 percent of the book value of their acquired real estate assets. Those assets are worth billions and billions of pesos. Those must be mountains of gold waiting to be tapped by your industry, the business leader told the developers.

He revealed that following the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98, local banks have found themselves owners of unfinished subdivisions, buildings and are now awash with real estate assets that have been behaving like liabilities. *Abe P. Belena, Philexport News and Features*

100 YEARS OF PHILIPPINE AVIATION
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A FOCUS ON
AIRLINE
MANAGEMENT
AVELINO L. ZAPANTA

Ex-PAL exec writes book on local aviation

FORMER Philippine Airlines president Avelino L. Zapanta recently launched a new book on Philippine Aviation.

Called "100 years of Philippine Aviation, 1909-2009: A Focus on Airline Management," is the first in a series of publications being written by Zapanta, culled from his 38 years of service at PAL, the last five as president, steering the airline into the first half of the rehabilitation plan.

Zapanta calls the book the first and most comprehensive work on such subjects as: basic concepts of flight and aviation highlights; airline organizations, functions and operations; airline economic; airline aeropolitics, and airline marketing.

The first book of the series on Airline Management is for stakeholders in air travel, from the backpackers to First Class travelers, from the parcel-consignee to volume shippers, consolidators and just-in-time establishment receipts.

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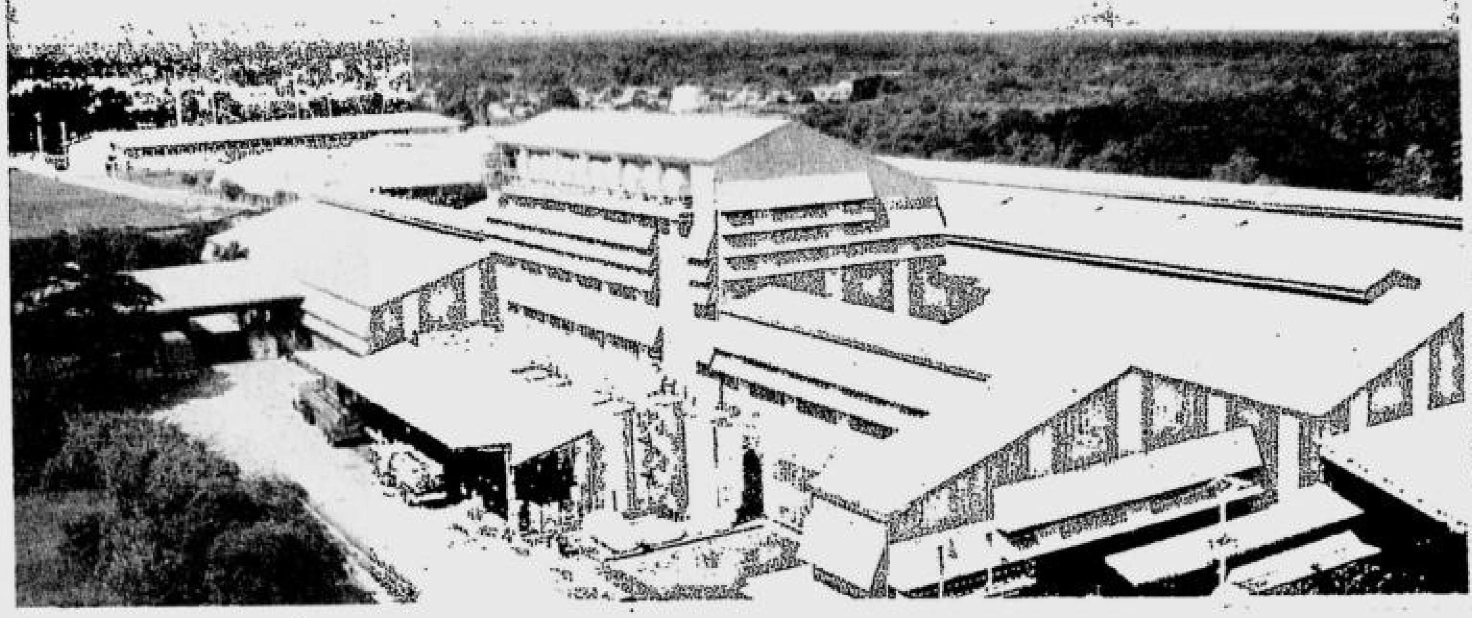


MESSAGES

I convey my warmest congratualtions to the management and personnel of Atlantic Coatings, Inc. for having been awarded an ISO 9001:2000 International Quality Management Certification and an ISO 14001:1996 Environmental Management Certification from the Bureau Veritas (BVQI) and the United Kingdom Accreditation Services (UKAS).

Your achievement affirms the resolve of more of our local companies to improve quality of their products and services to better compete in the global market. The government recognizes your unceasing efforts to succeed in today's global economy. To encourage our local companies to do better, we are modernizing the country's infrastructure and improving the climate for more investments and faster movement of people, goods and services.

I am glad that your efforts to improve your business have borne fruit. Having won this international award, you are expected to focus on excellence and commitment to service at a high level. As you set your sight on greater success, I urge you to remain supportive of our development agenda so that the lives of our people may be uplifted to enable them to enjoy progress and stability.

Again, congratulations and mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) congratulate Boysen Paints. for its tremendous achievement of having its manufacturing facility awarded with an internationally recognized standard for environmental performance - ISO 14001 certification.

The philosophy of environmental management has come along way. Much progress has been realized in making business and other related sectors acknowledge the value of integrating environmental concern in activities, at the onset. This progress has been attained with certain costs if any, to ensure the momentum it had gained. There is no other way for businesses to go. There is just no turning back. Everyone must consider the impact of their activities on the environment and the communities they live and work in.

We hope that businesses will be encouraged to consider the gains of linking up more closely with the government and with the community and civil society in ensuring a sustainable world for everyone. We are especially proud for having with us as partner, the Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers, which signed an Environmental Consent Agreement through our Philippine Environmental Partnership Program towards a firm commitment to enhance environmental performance while doing business.

More power to you.

MICHAEL T. DEFENSOR
DENR Secretary

IT is every Filipino company's hope and dream to become world-class. To achieve this feat, it takes a lot of hard work and unrivalled commitment.

Atlantic Coatings Inc. (ACI) recent achievement could inspire more home-grown companies to compete side by side with other global brands. ACI is the sole contract manufacturer of Pacific Paint Philippines Inc. which distributes Boysen Paints.

ACI was awarded the ISO 9001:2000 International Quality Management Certification and the ISO 14001:1996 Environment Management Certification from Bureau Veritas with United Kingdom Accreditation Service.

The ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 signify that the ACI facility operates an integrated management system that is in accordance with international standards for both quality and environmental management.

Its main facility in Trece Martires City, Cavite, was considered the biggest and most modern paint manufacturing plant in Southeast Asia when it was built, and is one of the biggest and most modern in the whole of Asia.

"These two certifications mean that Boysen Paints is now at par with the top paint companies in the world and should help us in further increasing our export sales," said Willy Ong, president of Pacific Paint.

Boysen Paints are currently exported to various countries in China, Southeast Asia and Micronesia. The certifications would also open more opportunities for Pacific Paints Inc. to export to more countries.

"ISO 9001 means we aim to enhance customer satisfaction by manufacturing paint products of very high quality," said Laila Flores, plant manager of ACI. "We've done a lot of training so that our people can monitor, measure, and analyze our quality performance and find ways to still improve on them so that customers will be delighted with our products."

"It takes a great team to do great things, and we're very fortunate to have a very special team here in Atlantic Coatings. All the members of ACI really worked hard together as one family; as one solid, united team to make all of this possible," said Johnson Ongking of Atlantic Coatings. The team he is referring to includes Laila Flores, ACI plant manager, Rosedell Sacil, production manager; Rosanna Suarez, assistant production manger, and Gretchen Fontejon, safety manager, Quality Management Representative and Environmental Management Representative and all the engineers and operators working in the ACI facility.

"Aside from being the market leader, Boysen Paints has long been recognized as the leader in product quality and environmental friendliness in the Philippine paint industry," said Ong.

The state-of-the-art Boysen plant in Cavite, started operations at the dawn of the new millennium in 2000. It has a rated capacity of over 100 million liters of paint every year, more than enough to serve the present needs of the Filipino architectural paint market. The whole production process is controlled by computer automation to ensure accurate process control and consistent batch-to-batch performance.

Even before achieving ISO 14001 certification, the Boysen plant in Cavite had already initiated environmental protection measures ahead of other paint companies.

It was the first paint manufacturing facility in the Philippines to implement a Zero Generated Waste-Water Program, where all the water and solvent liquid waste in the plant are recycled. It was also the first to have a completely closed production system to minimize the spread of dust. As a result, the plant won first place in the Clean and Green Beautification Contest (Factory Category) awarded by Trece Martires in the last two years. The ACI plant beat out other food manufacturing companies in the city.

It was also chosen by the Tokyo-based GTR Institute as the benchmarking factory in 5S Good Housekeeping Practices for trainees from over 20 Japanese companies based in the Philippines in September 2003. Shuichi Yoshida, president of the GTR Institute and a Nissan veteran who has visited hundreds of companies all over the world, called ACI "one of the best 5S companies I have ever visited."

"In the early 1980s, we were the pioneer in switching away from non-mercurial preservatives despite the fact that the price for substitutes were over 20 times more expensive," Ong said. "There was no legislation against using paints with mercury. It was a voluntary environmental commitment on our part at that time that we have continued today with the ISO 14001 certification of our main production plant."

"The ISO 14001 means ACI is committed to minimizing harmful effects on the environment during all our activities through pollution prevention, lower energy usage and waste reduction," Flores said. "ISO has formalized an environment of quality, continuous improvement, environmental and safety consciousness in our organization. We are committed to continuous improvement throughout all our activities, which will lead to more efficient, safer and cleaner manufacturing. ISO certification of our integrated management system is a big step in fulfilling our vision of becoming a world class paint manufacturing company committed to excellence."

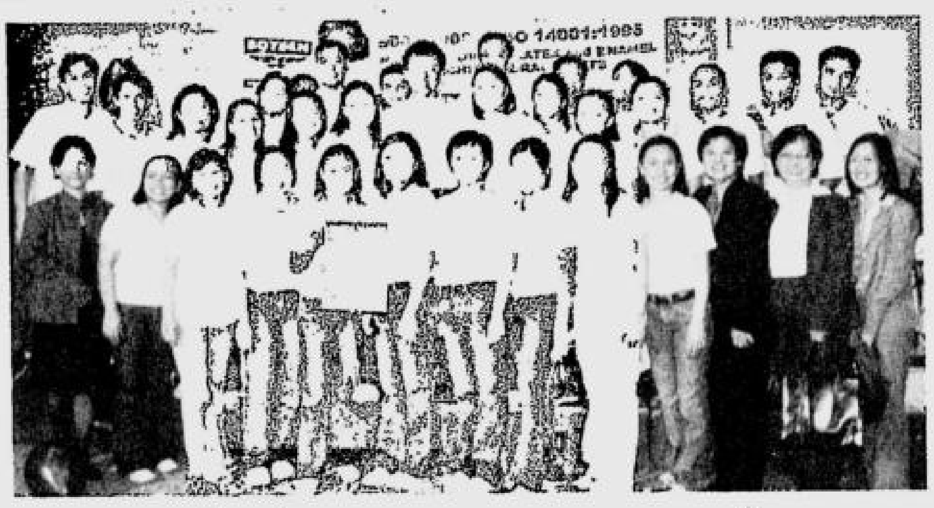
The ISO 14001 is a very important achievement for a company in the chemical industry. It establishes a reputation of being an environmentally responsible company. It also gives the consumers the confidence that they are doing business with people who value Mother Earth. In patronizing the product, the consumers, on the other hand has somehow become a part of being environment friendly.

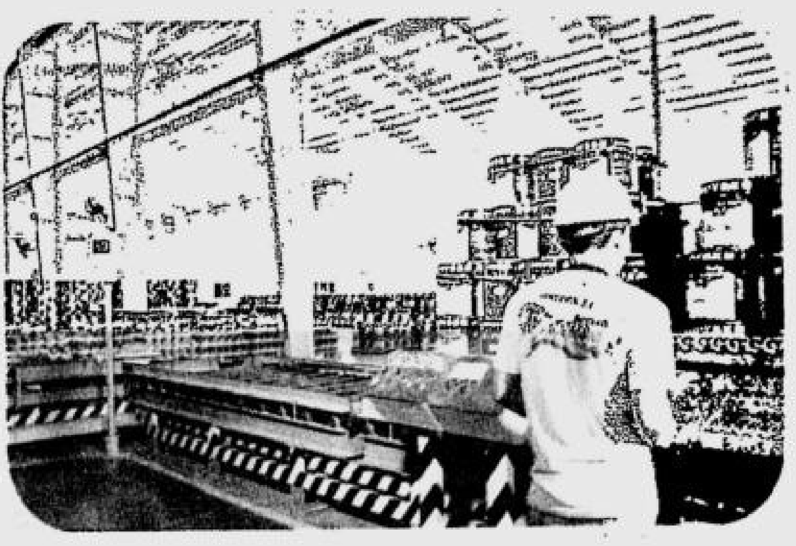
The successful ISO certification is the latest in a string of notable citations received by Boysen Paints. It was the highest ranking company among the Asean countries to be ranked in the top paint companies in the world by Coatings Agenda Asia Pacific from 2000-2002. It was the only paint company awarded Superbrands status in the Philippines last year.

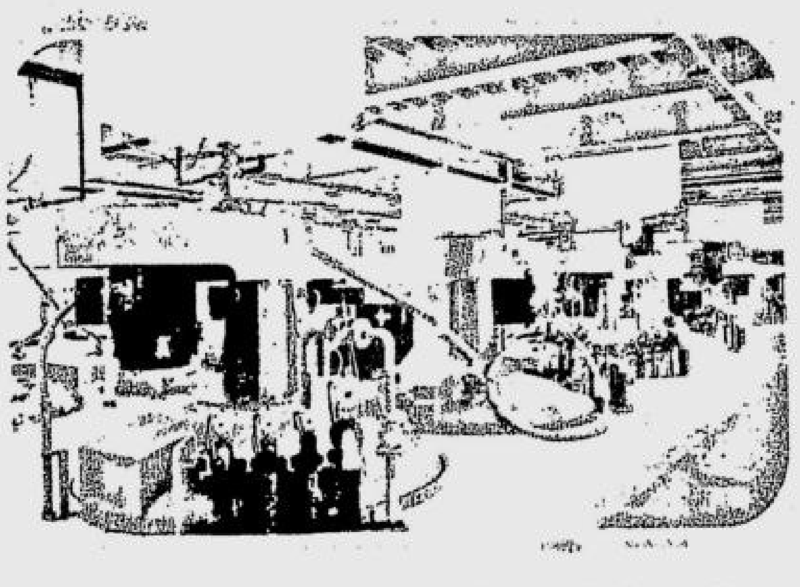
Boysen Paints has also taken the active lead in product development of environmentally friendly paints, being the first paint company to introduce a water based lead free metal primer (Primeguard) and water based acrylic epoxy (Acqua Epoxy) paint in the country. Recently, the company has also launched a low-odor water-based paint line for users who would like to use a freshly painted area as soon as possible after painting. This can be helpful in places such as offices, restaurants, hotel and motel rooms, residential living, dining and bedrooms. Boysen Paints has also introduced a hygienic anti-bacterial line that is specially formulated to prevent the growth of several strains of bacteria such as MRSA, E. coli and Staphylococcus Aureus that is ideal for use in clinics, hospitals, pharmaceutical and food manufacturing facilities, nursing home and day care centers, as well as family residences requiring better sanitary conditions such as elderly people and young children.

The majority of product sales today are in more environmentally friendly water based paints free of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and this proportion will continue to grow in the future.

BOYSEN
ISO 9001:2000
ISO 14001:1996







Even before achieving ISO 14001 certification, the Boysen plant in Cavite had already initiated environmental protection measures ahead of other paint companies

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From repacking to innovating, 5 decades of paint excellence

THE CONSTRUCTION industry in the Philippines has not been a high growth market since the regional economic downturn of 1997. As a consequence, all sectors of related business have been affected, including the paints for the housing industry. Pacific Paints (Boysen) Philippines, Inc. breaks the mold in this respect. While other big names have closed shop or abandoned manufacturing and sales operations in the Philippines, the Boysen brand has exhibited sustained success and has been the country's premier brand for architectural coatings.

Due to the confidence and trust Boysen has built over the years, Boysen Paints is the preferred brand of architects, engineers, interior designers, constructors and homeowners. Boysen is available through an extensive network of about 1,500 dealers and sub-dealers nationwide. This far-reaching and comprehensive reach allows the company to deliver its premium quality products to many areas in the Philippines, giving Boysen a selling edge over the competition. The company operates the biggest and most modern paint manufacturing facility in Southeast Asia to date. With its enormous manufacturing capacity, Boysen has been able to expand beyond the local market and gain product acceptance abroad.

The company celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2003. Since the early 1970s, Boysen has been the leading brand in the Philippines and consistently maintained its position as market leader in the paint industry.

Expansion

The company was originally founded in 1953 as a repacker of paint and lacquer thinners under the trade name Columbus. In 1958, the company expanded its operations with the introduction of an economy line under the brand name Nation House Paints. In 1960, the company accomplished a pivotal milestone by acquiring the license to manufacture Boysen Paints from the Walter N. Boysen Company of Oakland, California. This allowed the company to add a premium brand to its product lines, as well as introduce a comprehensive catalogue of Boysen decorative coatings for architectural applications. Five of its major product lines were awarded the PS Mark Distinction of Quality by the Bureau of Product Standards in December 1995, more than that of any other paint manufacturer in the country.

From then on, Boysen confidently targeted and successfully addressed the high-end requirements of the Philippine paint market. By the early 1970s, the company had captured the lion's share of the premium quality paint market in the country. Since then, it had consistently maintained its market leadership position in the Philippines.

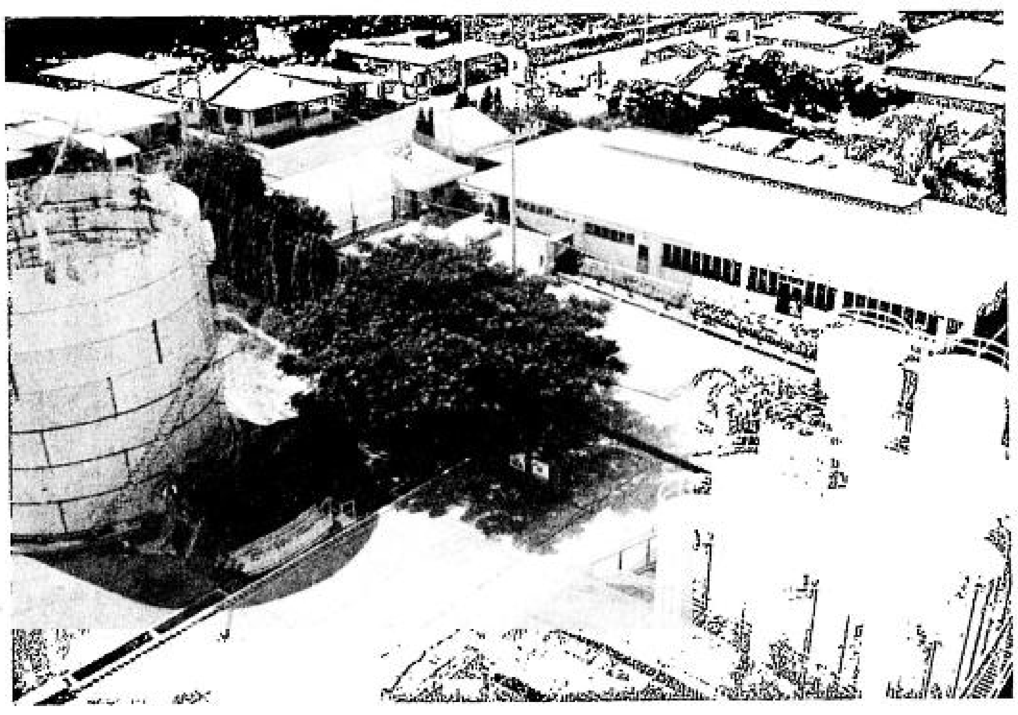
With the original Quezon City plant no longer able to cope with the growing demand for Boysen paints, the company launched a major expansion program in 1986. It set up manufacturing facilities in a two-hectare lot in Bicutan that was three times the capacity of its Quezon City plant. When the company projected a capacity shortfall in 1996, it decided to undertake another expansion project to consolidate all manufacturing facilities and set up a new plant three times the capacity of Bicutan.

In 2000, the company commissioned a fully integrated state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Trece Martires, Cavite. The gargantuan facility is situated on a 10-hectare property and has a rated capacity of about 100 million liters per annum.

The ACI plant is located alongside some of the company's raw material suppliers, including Boysen's sister companies involved in emulsion and resin manufacturing. Together with its existing manufacturing plants in Quezon City, and Sta. Maria, Bulacan, the plant have put Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines in an even better position to service its customers with reliable supply and continually improving product quality well into the 21st century.

Boysen Paint's quality is recognized not only locally but also by consumers in China, Guam, Saipan, Brunei, and Hong Kong. With the steady growth of its exports to these countries, PPOMI is now the largest domestic exporter of architectural paints. The success of Boysen Paints in attaining a significant foothold in these markets has proven that it can compete successfully vis-a-vis American

REPACKING/B4-4



The company operates the biggest and most modern paint manufacturing facility in Southeast Asia to date

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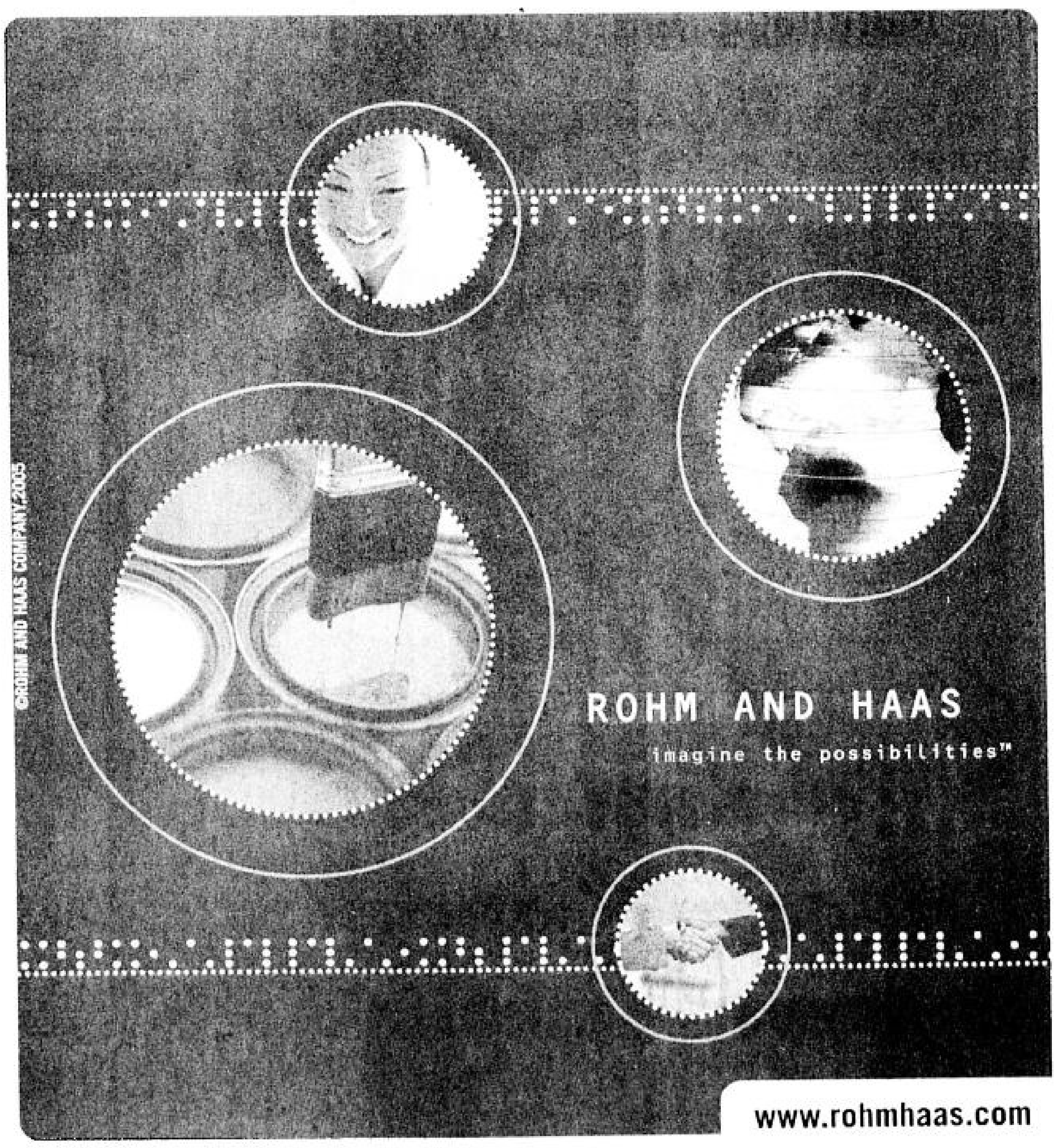

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From repacking to innovating, 5 decades of paint excellence

From page B4-3

and other Western brands.

As the market leader, PPOMI is firmly committed to always provide the best quality product to its customers at the lowest price possible. It also strives to provide the best possible service to its customers, and has set up a Technical Services Department to provide assistance to consumers regarding product use and applications, instruction of proper surface preparation and painting techniques.

Market leader

Boysen manufactures architectural coatings for both interior and exterior finishes which includes latex, enamel, roofing paints, wood stains, lacquers, colorant and special decorative products. In addition, Boysen also carries limited products for industrial application like polyurethane and epoxy paints.

Boysen has been the undisputed market leader since the early 1970s because of its premium quality, supply reliability, value for money, extensive distribution network and outstanding customer service throughout the decades.

Also the industry leader in product innovation, it is constantly involved in the development of new products aimed at meeting specific market needs, particularly in environment friendly paints. The company maintains a fully equipped and staffed research and de-

REPACKING/ B4-6

Its modern laboratory constantly tests the latest available raw materials and draws up new formulations to improve the properties of Boysen Paint products.

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From repacking to innovating . . .

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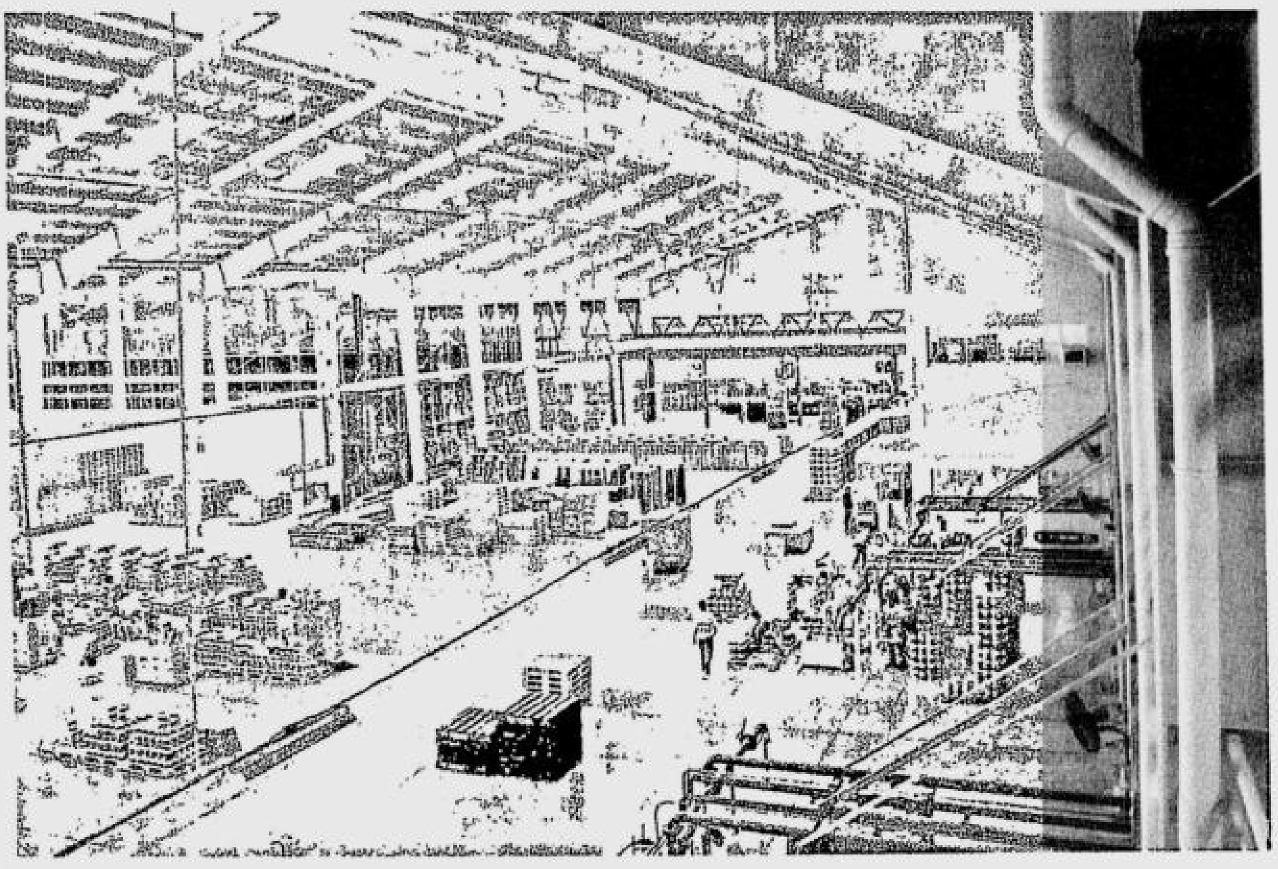

velopment laboratory that works to constantly develop new water-based paints free of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are less harmful to the environment.

Its modern laboratory constantly tests the latest available raw materials and draws up new formulations to improve the properties of Boysen Paint products. It has set up outdoor panels for long-term exposure testing to continuously monitor the quality and durability of its products when exposed to elements. This affirms Boysen's commitment to its customers-to give them the best quality products at the lowest possible prices.

Recent developments

In 2003, the company was renamed from Pacific Paint and Oil Manufacturing Inc to Pacific Paint (Boysen) Philippines Inc in order to highlight the immense goodwill the brand has generated to generations of paint consumers.

Promotion

The bulk of Boysen's promotional activities focuses on continuously carrying out education programs and sponsoring conferences and trade exhibits of paint users and

REPACKING/ B4-7

The successful ISO certification is the latest in a string of notable citations received by Boysen Paints. It was the highest ranking paint company in the ASEAN region to be ranked among the top paint companies in the world by the Coatings Agenda Asia Pacific from 2000-2002.

Boysen has assumed the industry leadership in developing and implementing initiatives in the preservation of the environment. Boysen's production plant in Cavite is the only paint manufacturing plant in the Philippines to implement the Zero Generated Waste Water Program

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From repacking to innovating . . .

From page B4-6

construction practitioners.

Boysen generates awareness among homeowners and consumers through TV advertising and print ads in the broadsheets and trade magazines. In addition, Boysen is actively involved in social responsibility and public awareness initiatives, especially where preservation of the environment is concerned. The company actively assists orphanages, barangays, schools, churches and civic organizations. Moreover, it is involved in the painting of street signs, bridges and overpasses in coordination with the local government and the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA). It conducts ongoing seminars for out-of-school youths aimed at fostering painting skills, promoting employment and ultimately doing its fair share to alleviate poverty.

Brand values

The Boysen logo of the bald eagle and the tag line "The No. 1 Paint" symbolize undisputed leadership in terms of quality, reliability, value for money, and commitment to customer satisfaction in all aspects from pre- to after sales service activities.

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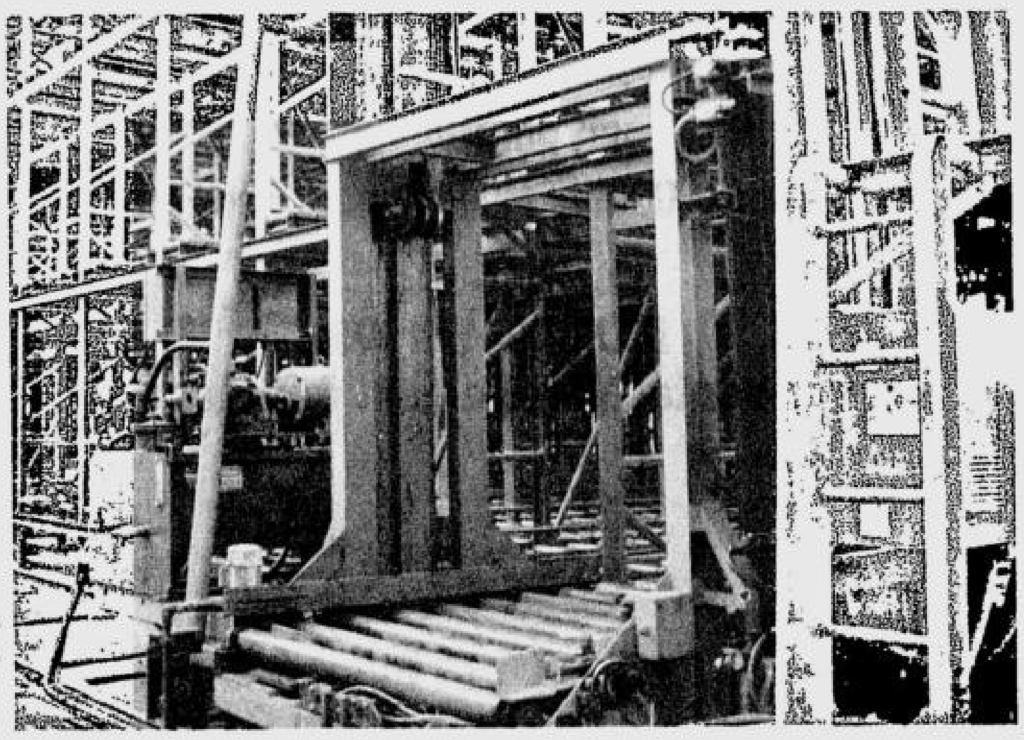

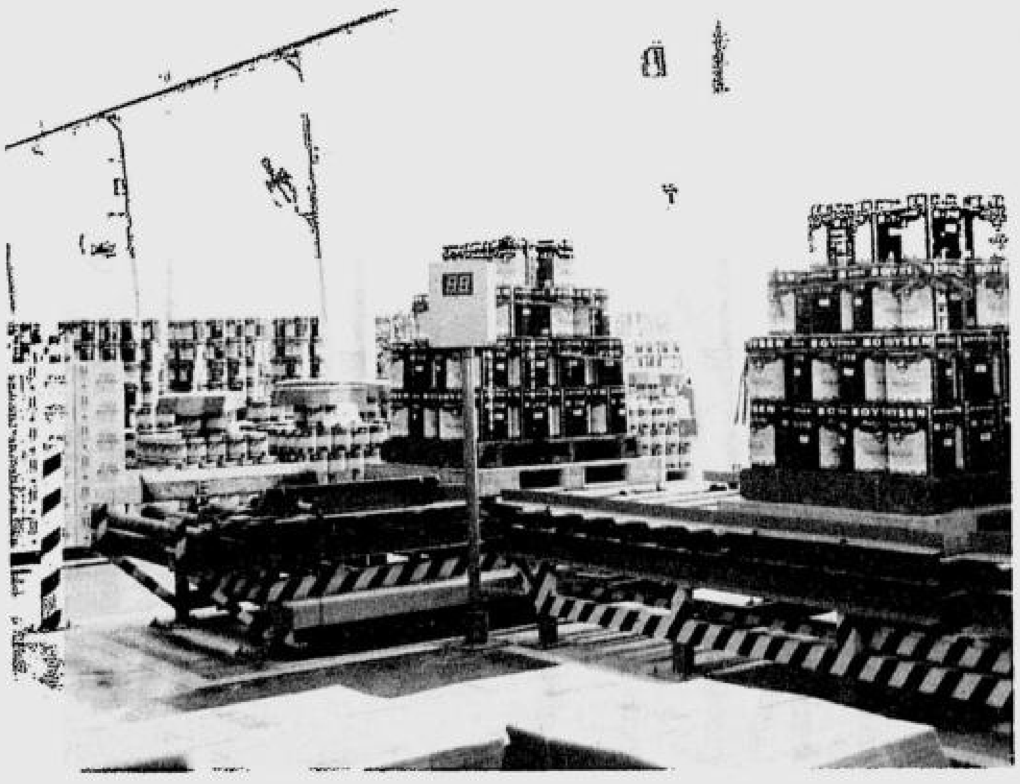

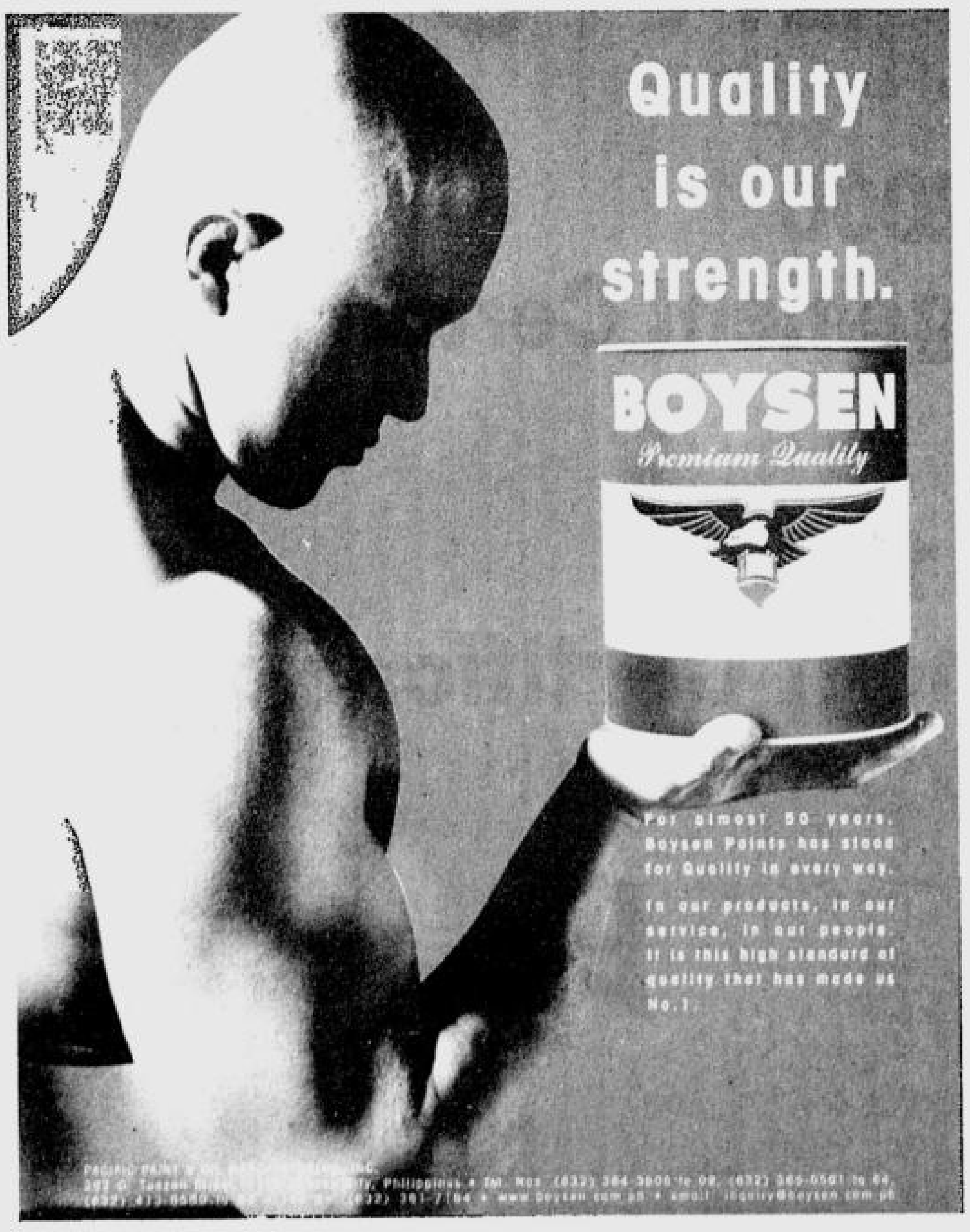

For almost 50 years, Boysen Paints has stood for Quality in every way.

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Boysen generates awareness among homeowners and consumers through TV advertising and print ads in the broadsheets and trade magazines. In addition, Boysen is actively involved in social responsibility and public awareness initiatives, especially where preservation of the environment is concerned.

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LIFESTYLE

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THE LAST of his miniature series, "Harana," that was made into a greeting card in the 1970s

Catching up with Romeo V. Tabuena

By Ramses J. Sison
Contributor

THERE was no hesitation when I signed up for a workshop on graphic arts in Mexico City recently. To visit Mexico was a lifelong dream. Finally, I would be able to see for myself the pyramids built by hand by the Aztecs, the rich Mexican cultural sites lovingly and painstakingly preserved by its people, the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe with Juan Diego's miraculous "serape," and the birthplace and the works of Mexico's greatest artist, Diego Rivera.

Above all, this was the opportunity to look up and meet Romeo V. Tabuena, the Filipino neorealist painter whose works I have long admired even while I was a student at the University of Santo Tomas. He chose to settle in Mexico almost 50 years ago yet he never gave up his Philippine citizenship and continued to honor his country in the international art scene.

San Miguel de Allende is a city in the province of Guanajuato, which is known in Europe and America as an international community of artists. It is a three-hour drive from Mexico City. Walking its narrow cobblestone streets lined with two-story colonial houses and driving through town past old churches side by side or across each other were steps back to the old Mexico centuries ago.

Here lives the master, Romeo V. Tabuena, and his wife, Nina, in a beautiful Old World villa surrounded by a well-kept, hillside garden. I was settled in its airy, high-ceilinged living room bathed with light coming through its French doors, and admiring the endless vintage and recent Tabuena paintings that filled the walls some showing his classic *sabungero*, carabaos, *harana* series dating back to the '60s and '70s.

Señora Nina Tabuena, the lady of the house, came down the semi-circular staircase and welcomed me. She was instantly joined by the maestro himself.

Meeting him, even without talking about his paintings, was itself an experience. He was slim and wiry, but stood erect, carrying the wisdom of his years with the dignity of a true observer of life. The *señora*, on the other hand, was elegant, beautiful and gracious—also an acknowledged artist in her own right.

The persona of Romeo V. Tabuena has always been shrouded with mystery and awe but accorded very deep respect in Philippine art circles.

In the Latin-American art scene, Romeo Tabuena is likewise a well-respected figure. His works and articles about him are featured in Latin-American publications and art journals. This impression I gathered and read about from more than a dozen Spanish publications strewn all over while waiting for my hosts.

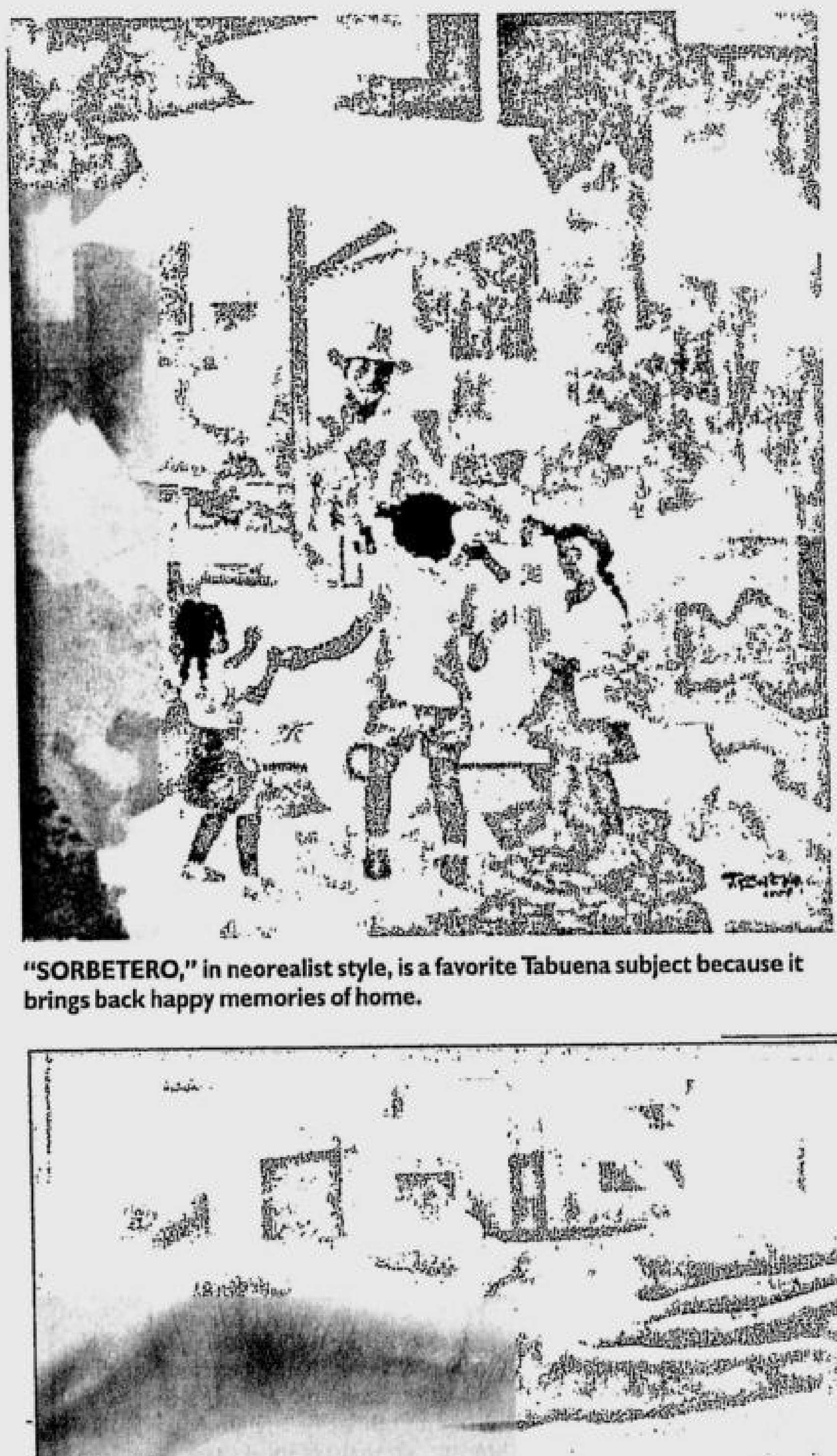
A contemporary of Hernando Ocampo, Arturo Luz, Nena Saguil and other masters, Tabuena was already highly acclaimed in the local art community when he left for the United States and, from there, on an artistic tour of Europe, in the 1950s.

His journey ended in the culturally rich, artistic setting of Mexico, which he chose as his home base.

But though far from home, he continued to be recognized by the international art community as an outstanding Filipino artist.

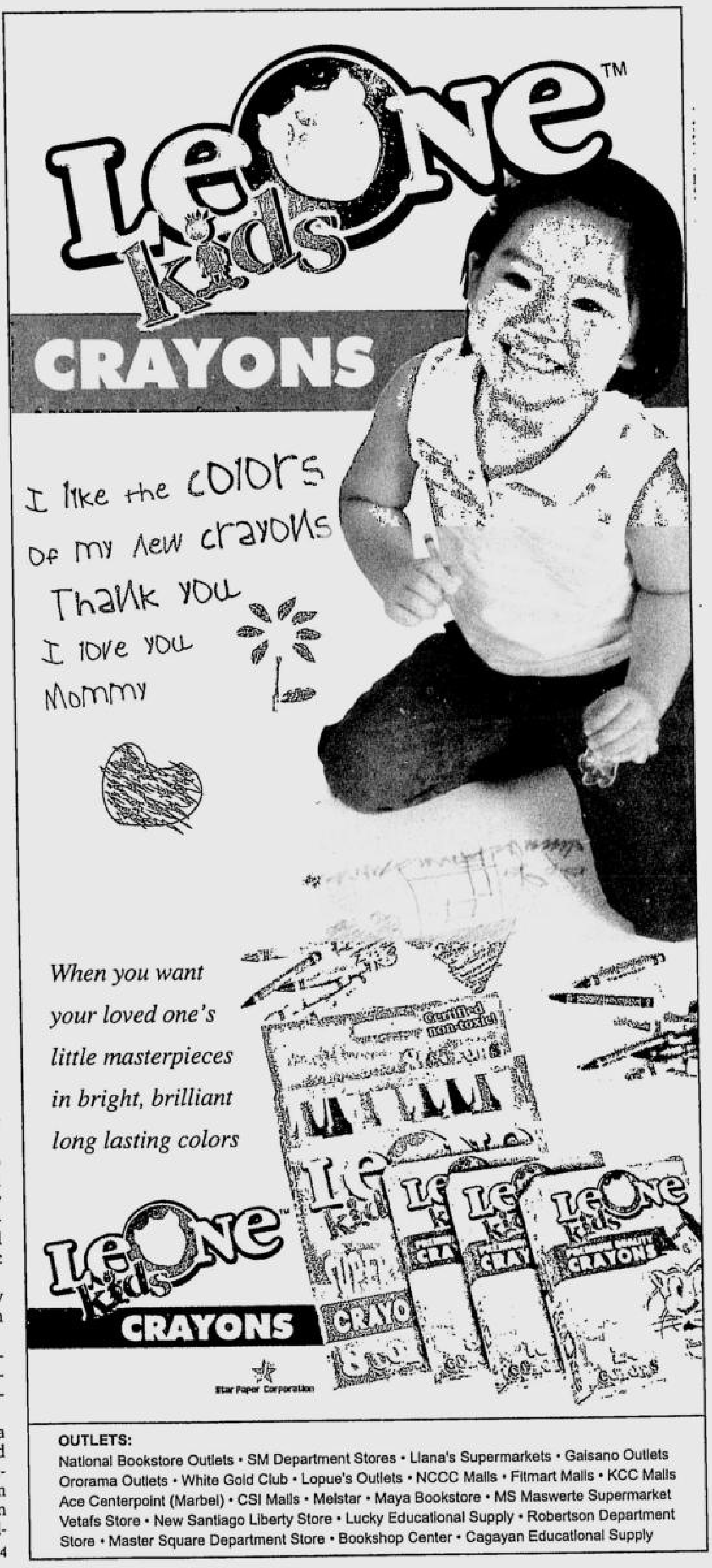
In all interviews he gives, Tabuena always stresses that he is a Filipino and feels proud of his heritage. And despite his five decades of absence from his homeland, he is sought out in San Miguel de Allende in Mexico by Fil-

CATCHING/ C4



"SORBETERO," in neorealist style, is a favorite Tabuena subject because it brings back happy memories of home.

'There's just so much untapped potential in our country like in sculpture, art, even in architecture. And if everything normalizes, and if there is no more social unrest, with the government encouraging art, the painters and other artists would really be able to realize their full potential'



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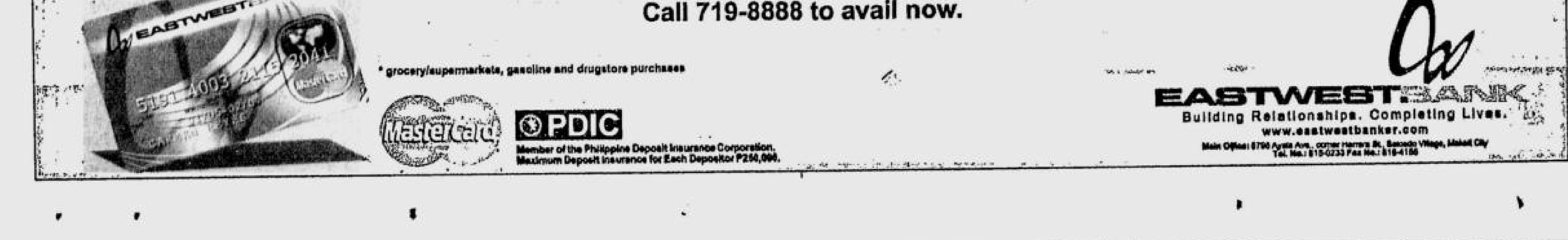

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INAUGURATED last week, Baguio Central School was restored by the DepEd Heritage Schoolhouse Program of the cooperation of the Heritage Conservation Society.

THIS is heritage, too. The stuff we dismiss as "ordinary" sometimes turns out to be important for the Filipino psyche.

31 joyful days of heritage

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

FOR this month, the Filipino Heritage Festival takes heritage out of the closet and presents a series of nationwide events to awaken our blissfully unaware and unappreciative *kababayan* to how special and multi-faceted Filipino heritage is.

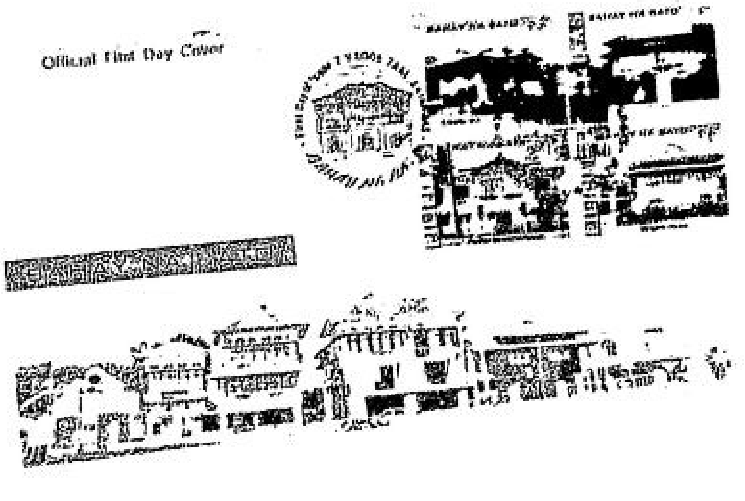
The valiant effort by the Heritage Festival committee is commendable and the level of detail in their planning is admirable.

But, sadly, it will take more than a month of festival each year to mainstream heritage to an indifferent Filipino people who look at heritage as "elitist" and "irrelevant," failing to see its relevance to their daily lives and as a sadly missing element in the current thrust toward nation-building.

The ultra-precious artifacts encased in bulletproof glass in the National Museum are part of our culture. So are the poetry of Balagtas,- the vanishing traditional script and the lyrical poetry of the Hanunoo in Mindoro, the sculpture of Tolentino, the music of Abelardo and the *zarzuelas* now rarely performed in town fiestas, the Pasyon read every Holy Week, and the architecture by masters like Juan Arellano or the unknown traditional craftsmen who built our magnificent Spanish colonial churches.

Believe it or not, the cultural picture of the Philippines is also made up of *pastillas de leche* individually packaged in multicolored cutout wrappers. Taste forms an important part of our culture, seen in the diverse regional cuisines all around the country.

Culture includes the traditional (and vanishing) lifestyles of the farmers living in the Rice Terraces of the Cordilleras and the sturdy Ivatans who weather typhoon after typhoon that buffets their storm-tossed islands.



SEND heritage to a friend through one of the special heritage stamps issued to commemorate the 2005 Filipino Heritage Festival.

Other Filipino cultural manifestations embrace a wide range of examples: the *carromata*, *calesa* and jeepney; the fine embroidery on antique church vestments, the precursor of what is seen in our modern *barong* Tagalog, and the grace and sensitivity of contemporary performers in time-honored folk dances that shame today's dancers doing their noontime television routines of paltry, banal dances.

Culture is not just the lofty stuff people mistakenly think it is. Culture is also the everyday stuff that touches every aspect of our daily lives.

The broad picture of Philippine culture takes in everything that expresses Filipino lifestyles past and present.

Our culture is what sets us apart from other people. It is our shared touchstone that unites us in this rapidly globalizing world. Culture is unappreciated by many of our countrymen and national authorities who have not developed any substantial cultural programs as a necessary component in nation-building.

The month-long series of events scheduled by the Filipino Heritage Festival proves how special and unique our culture is.

The festival opened in Davao early May with a weekend of tribal dances, showing of regional costumes, and conducting tours of heritage sites in and around the city and as far as Lake Sebu.

"Noon at Ngayon," a photo exhibit, is running at the Filipinas Heritage Library in Makati. It is inspired by vintage photographs from the extensive Filipinas Library collection.

Marikina

The City of Marikina joins with a week-long festival, offering a fluvial parade, a riverbank competition of native games along the Marikina stretch of Pasig River, and concerts at the Capitan Moy house in the city center.

Food festivals featuring different types of regional cuisine are happening the entire month in major hotels in Makati: ancestral recipes at the Manila Peninsula; Pampango cuisine at the Hotel InterContinental; Bulakeño food at the Mandarin Oriental; Cebuano at the New World Renaissance; Bicolano at the Edsa Shangri-La; and a changing menu of regional cuisine at the Makati Shangri-La.

Month-long exhibits of work by our 45 National Artists together with a significant exposition of rare tribal artifacts will be held at Rustan's Tower at Shangri-La Plaza.

After the Taal, Batangas, launch on May 7 of a series of stamps featuring traditional *bahay-na-bato*, tours and parades around the town of Taal were held in the afternoon, ending with Batangas delicacies being served in ancestral homes.

At Mariyah Gallery in Dumaguete, there is a show of remarkable terra cotta-sculptures by artists from Negros Oriental.

The Chinese in Filipino culture was highlighted over the weekend at the Parian Gate in Intramuros with a festival of martial arts, folk dances, calligraphy and traditional cuisine. There was also a *tiangge* of pottery and porcelain, silks, Oriental spices. Martial-art displays, movies, and fireworks capped the weekend.

Antipolo tour

Heritage fans will gather at Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park at 7 a.m. on May 21 for a visit to Antipolo Church. They will also visit the Santos residence and have a lunch of *sinigang na kanduli, guinataang hipon sa looc, kalderetang tunay* and *pininyahang manok*.

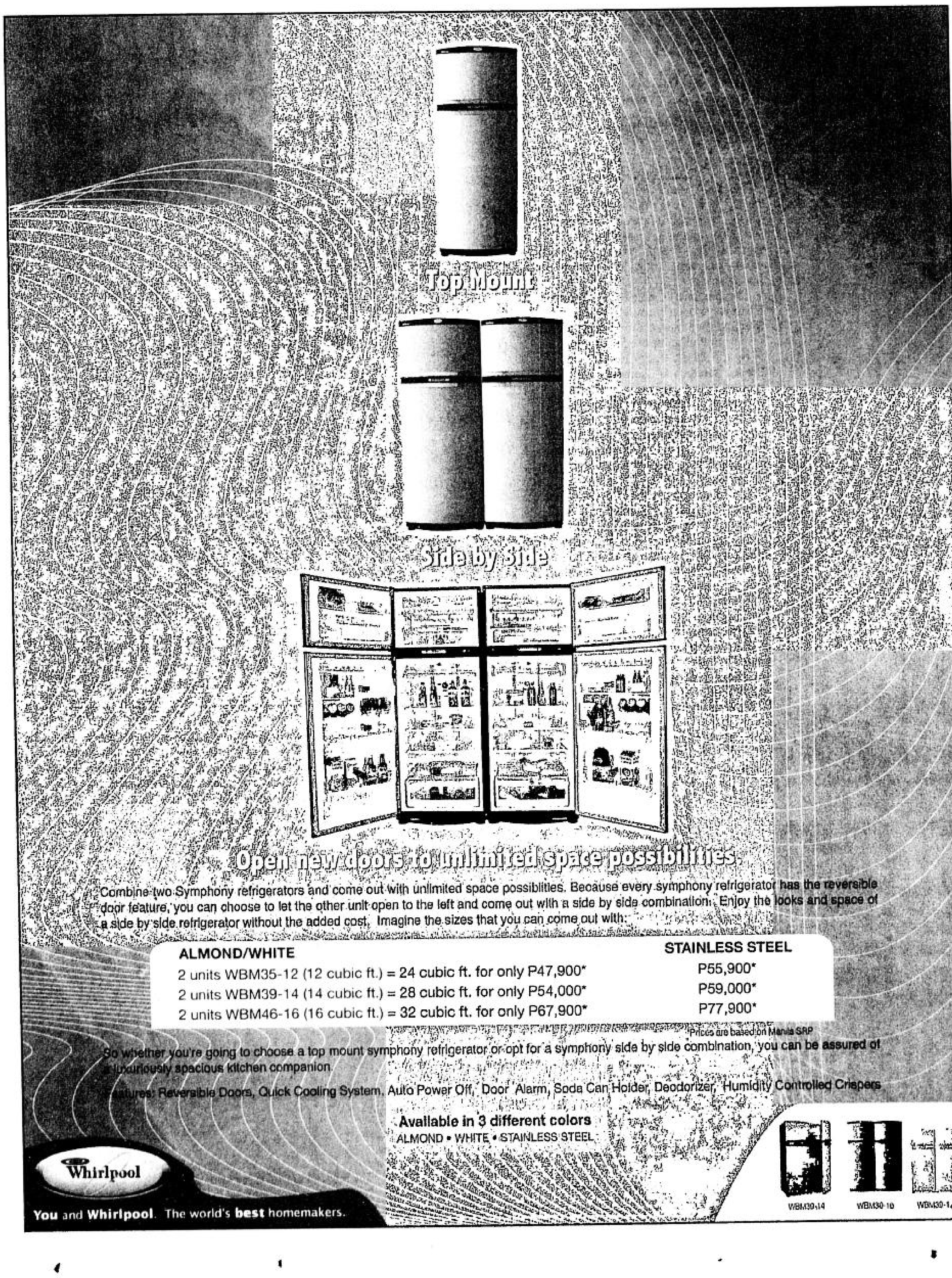
There will be a tour of Hagonoy, Bulacan, on May 25 to visit the patrimonial shrine of Our Lady of Sta. Ana and experience the "Balagtasan sa Bulacan." There will be folk dancing and a *tiangge* of local sweets.

There will be concerts at Victorias Cultural Center in Negros Occidental on May 26 featuring Negrense groups performing original Negrense music and dance.

At Saint Peter and Paul Parish Church in Poblacion, Makati, on May 30, acclaimed pianist and University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music dean Raúl Sunico will play Philippine *kundiman* and religious music.

The month's festivities close at Plaza Inde-

31 JOYFUL/C3



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31 joyful . . .

From page C2

pendencia in Cebu on May 28. The affair will showcase the timeless traditions and customs of the Cebuanos. A shopper's paradise will feature local craft, seafood and a flea market, while a variety of local arts and cultural performances will be held.

The Filipino Heritage Festival, ambitious as it is, barely scratches the surface of the vast, multi-layered heritage of the Philippines.

We need a heritage event for each of the 365 days in a year to fully awaken the Filipino nation to the fact that theirs is a one-of-a-kind culture, totally unique in a globalizing world, and that it is precisely their culture that gives them an identity setting them apart from the rest of the world.

Upon realizing our uniqueness, it becomes essential for all of us to take united steps that assure our culture remains intact and does not vanish into memory, as it is sadly happening today.

Heritage watch

The Heritage Conservation Society and Department of Education inaugurated the Baguio Central School on May 14. It is the second schoolhouse to be completed in the HCS-DepEd Heritage Schoolhouse Program, where HCS provides the technical services to restore old schoolhouses for their re-use as modern classrooms for students of today.

E-mail your feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

Alvarado and Española welcome British art products

ART SUPPLIES, of Daler-Rowney Ltd. of England, is now in the Philippines.

As a leading European manufacturer and distributor of fine-arts and graphic-arts materials and supplies, it distributes over 7,500 high-quality materials worldwide, including oil, acrylic and watercolor. The oil which comes in 87 colors, and watercolor, available in 80 colors, were favored by masters John Constable and JMW Turner.

The company also markets all kinds of painting and drawing surfaces, including the Saunders Waterford Series watercolor paper, considered the finest watercolor paper in the world. It sells brushes of all kinds, the highly recommended sable brushes and the revolutionary Dalon brushes, palette and painting knives, and specialized artist tools and accessories.

The company will market its products through Galerie Andrea, a trusted name in the gallery business, with its main store at Casa Manila in Intramuros. An artists' reception will be held in June in the gallery.

Other products to be locally introduced include Daler-Rowney pastels (including soft pastels in 200 color tints), charcoal sticks, FW acrylic ink, varnish and fixatives, oil and acrylic mediums, gesso primers, designers gouache.

Galerie Andrea will also be offering this month art classes to enthusiasts, ages 15 and above. There will be a limited number of slots per class. Two leading artists have been invited to teach, namely Nunelucio Alvarado and Noli Española.

Alvarado is one of the country's leading expressionists, who has explored a host of national issues such as the plight of the *sacadas* in Negros, migrant workers from the South.

Española is a well-known figurative painter who has won the grand prize at the 12th Hispanidad painting contest and the first prize at the Human Rights painting competition.

All Daler-Rowney art products and supplies will also be available at the other office of Galerie Andrea at the Yulo Plaza Townhomes (across Don Bosco) on Pasong Tamo, Makati City. Call 8121927 or 5274089.

ARTIST Noli Española and Nunelucio Alvarado demonstrate the use of Daler-Rowney products.

PINTACASI, the Journal of the Cultural Heritage of the Church in the Philippines, has just been released by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the University of Santo Tomas Center for Intercultural Studies and Center for the Conservation of Cultural Property and Environment in the Tropics. The first issue contains the papers presented during the First National Convention of Church Cultural Heritage Workers in the Diocese of Tagbilaran in Bohol in 1999. Among the papers are by Fernando Zialcita, Isidro Abaño, O.P., Bernardita Maronilla Reyes, Regalado Trota Jose, Rene Luis Mata, Rene Javellana, S.J., Antonio Martino, Emmanuel Luis Romanillos, Alexandra Iñigo-Chua and Rosal Sumagaysay, as well as special messages by Angel Bautista, Jose Torralba, Ambassador Delfin Colome and Christina Carlo-Stella. Call 7409716 or 4061611 loc. 8340.

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Catching up with Romeo V. Tabuena

From page C1

ipino art patrons wishing to have his very ex pensive masterpieces grace their homes.

At the time of my visit, the Maestro was busy giving the finishing touches to four paintings commissioned by an avid Tabuena collector from Manila. Tabuena graciously allowed us to photograph them.

Years ago, Galerie Bleu and Rustan's Glecy Tantoco brought back some Tabuena pieces from Mexico, which were immediately snapped up by local art patrons.

Judy Araneta Roxas has an extensive Tabuena collection. She leads a select group of moneyed Filipino Tabuena aficionados.

A delicious lunch of *pancit* (yes, *pansit*, Mexican style), soy chicken and shrimp fried rice, with fruit pie as dessert, was served right on a large glass table—not in the dining room but right in the living room—a most thoughtful gesture extended to a stranger like me.

I asked Maestro Tabuena to share his thoughts on his art and, perhaps, show his countrymen some of his works through my digital camera. With refreshing humility and much reluctance, he said he preferred to express his eloquence through his art.

But I succeeded in convincing him that the Philippines is eager to hear about him, especially about his art. And so we talked over lunch.

Who are your influences?

Since I'm dealing with forms basically and then colors in a way, I am more of a cubist in that sense. My style has cubistic elements, so I sometimes borrow from other cubists like Picasso, Braque and Leger, the French cubist.

So is it close to the Bauhaus movement?

No, because they don't deal with forms. Here in Mexico, there is only Tamayo whose colors I have a big respect for. I like the way he paints his art in terms of colors. There is so much to paint here in Mexico. I've been around. I've been in the States for some time. I've been working in New York, visiting so many countries and I always saw to it that I visit museums. I saw a lot of the works by the masters, but I noticed that it's better to go to a place where the atmosphere, the surroundings lend to the kind of painting that I do.

I like to do very simple people, ordinary humble people doing very ordinary tasks and all the simple scenes in daily life that catch my interest. These things I find in Mexico.

Of course I also find these in our country, the Philippines. That's the reason I immediately felt at home in this place. There is a lot of the Philippines in Mexico. I never really run out of ideas to paint.

In fact, almost every day, if it's possible, I go out and make sketches to give me ideas for painting. That's really what gets me going as part of my creative life.

What was your life like in the Philippines?

It was always related to my interest in art. First of course, I started as a commercial artist. It was right after the war and I was working with a lot of publications. Ramon Roces, Philippine News and then at the art gallery, the Philippine Art Gallery, of which I was part of the movement there called Neorealism, along with the rest of my contemporaries like Arturo Luz, Nanding Ocampo and Nena, yes, Nena Saguil.

ROMEO V. Tabuena and wife Nina live in a beautiful Old World villa in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuatco, Mexico. His wife is an artist in her own right.

Has anyone told you you have an expressionist approach with an impressionist feel?

The thing with my so-called "art" is, it's not a long straight line. I can follow a certain goal, direction, but sometimes I just swerve this way or that way, depending on certain influences. So my style travels in many directions. Either way, it's still evolving by itself. I cannot say that I have finally found my real style.

A true artist would not be confined to a single style.

Art travels in so many directions.

What do you call this genre of art? Is it simply called the Tabuena Style?

It could basically be the canvas. I express my art in a personal way of depicting universal themes. Because I believe that there are many kinds of expressions, not just the expressionist, like the surrealists. I am most inclined to capture what is real around me.

So is that the philosophy behind your art, what is real?

In my immediate surroundings. And if I am painting some kind of themes or subjects in Mexico, it doesn't mean that it has to be Mexican or if I am in the Philippines, it doesn't mean that it has to be Filipino. It's the kind of art that has to be universal.

Why do your viewers get lost in the prismatic ambiance of your masterpieces?

That's the way I would like it to be. Let the viewer find out for himself what really is behind the surface. He can stare and then he can look for what may affect him. I would like to basically reveal what is there in the attempt.

I get lost in it myself.

You get stimulated by looking at it.

How has your approach evolved through time?

These things come naturally. They are, of course, affected by experience. I have visited a lot of places in Europe. I have researched so many styles and evaluated them. They just come when I need them.

I don't know the timeline of when you were in Europe. Was it after you painted the "Sabungero" or when you were painting it?

Are you asking about the "cock fight"?

Yes.

I have done that kind of theme so many times.

The color scheme has changed from that period to now.

You can paint it in so many versions. It doesn't need to be the same color or color scheme.

When you create the simple portraits of life, where does the refreshing warmth come from?

You're probably talking about the light. There is plenty of light here in Mexico. The light is really something here. It's where all this color comes from.

Has this beautiful little town of San Miguel de Allende affected your art?

Not just San Miguel. There are a lot of places here in Mexico. San Miguel is just my base.

From the Philippines and abroad, do you have any recollection of interactions or encounters with other well-endowed artists such as yourself?

Recollection? Very few but the ones that are important to my development were with my contemporaries in the Philippines.

No drinking stories or such interaction with other prominent artists?

No. I mostly stay at home. Even here in San Miguel, I don't usually mix with some of the painters.

Do you miss the Philippines?

I do, very much. But let me tell you that it was here in this very town that I met my beautiful wife, Nina, and we both share each other's interest in art. We support each other in a spiritual way of course and, with each one's styles; we are able to complement each other in our works. We do not compete with each other. We support each other.

Any message you would like to say to your adoring public and to aspiring artists in the Philippines?

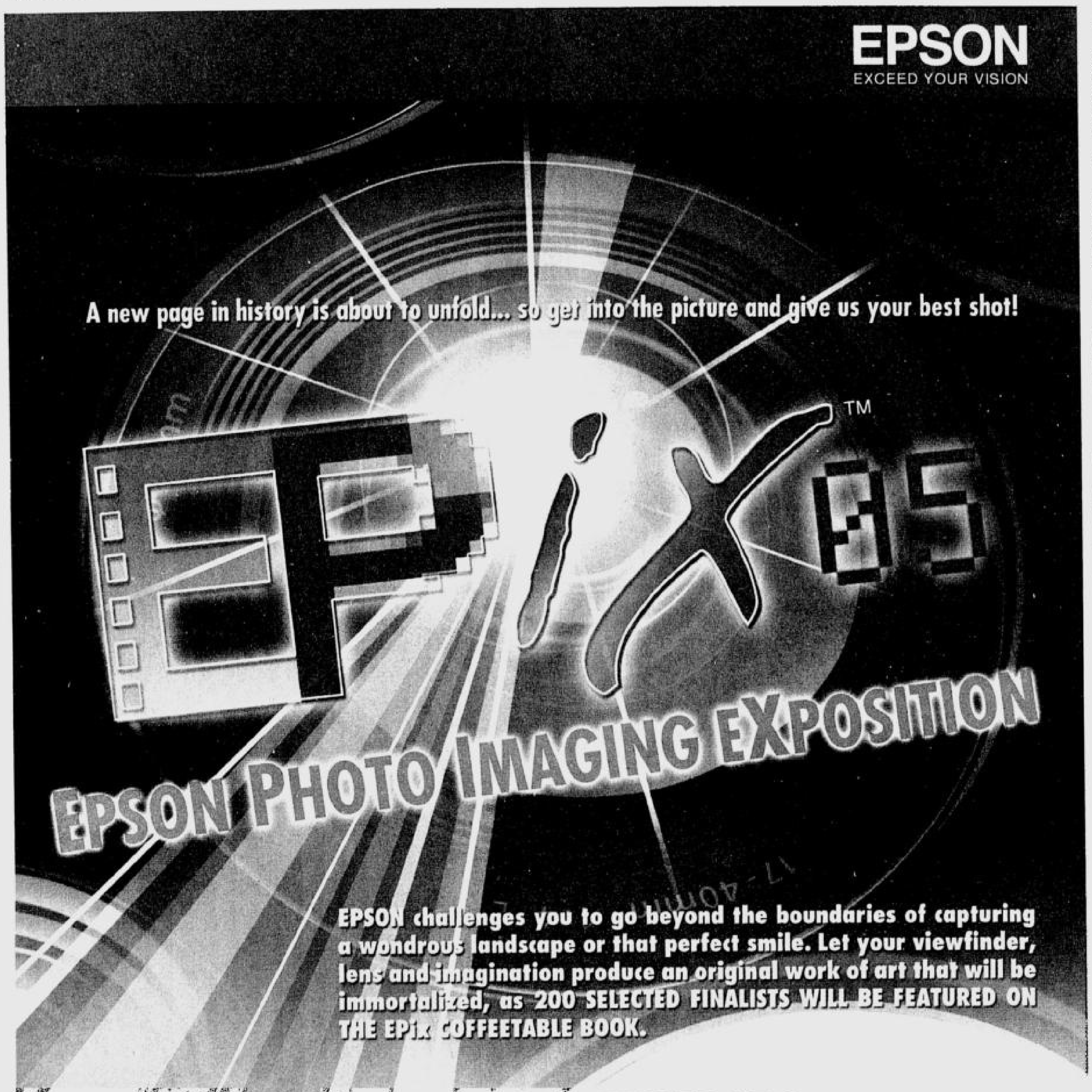
I think there's just so much untapped potential in our country like in sculpture, art, even in architecture. And if everything normalizes and if there is no more social unrest, with the government encouraging art, the painters and other artists would really be able to realize their full potential. They just need some balance. All they need is a push—financial, maybe—and also the opportunity to go abroad to experience the world.

To some other person, it might have been Brad Pitt or Madonna; to another, it could have been Bill Clinton or Nelson Mandela. To me, it was Romeo V. Tabuena, somebody I had only read and heard about and whose legend grew in my mind, every time I came upon his works in the Philippines, which were rare and seldom seen in the originals save for photos of his works in books and magazines.

Pinch me... wake me up... I have indeed spent a fruitful day with the Maestro Romeo V. Tabuena. For me, the rest of my trip in beautiful Mexico was merely icing on the cake.

The author is a University of Santo Tomas Fine Arts graduate, now working as a graphics art designer and writer in Los Angeles.

E-mail the author at egguana@yahoo.com



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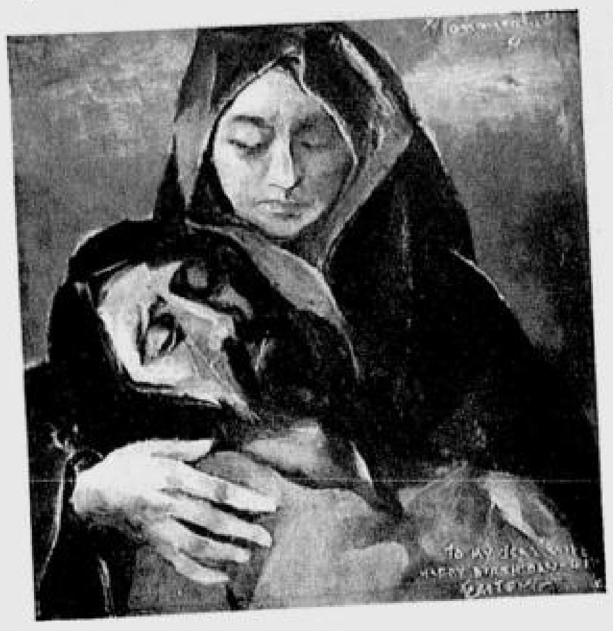
Kapampangan Center exhibits Manansala paintings


"MARY and Jesus"

FIVE original works of National Artist Vicente Manansala, a native of Macabebe, Pampanga, are on exhibit at the Holy Angel University Center for Kapampangan Studies in Angeles City.

The works are: "Mary and Jesus" (1981), Manansala's last known work; "Crucifixion" (1978); "Still Life Collage" (1976); and two works he did during his European tour, "Maria Laach" (1974) and "Streets of London" (1976).

They belong to the private collection of the wife of the late National Artist, Herminigilda Diaz Manansala, a native of Barangay Saguin, San Fernando. All paintings have Manansala's personal dedications to his wife.

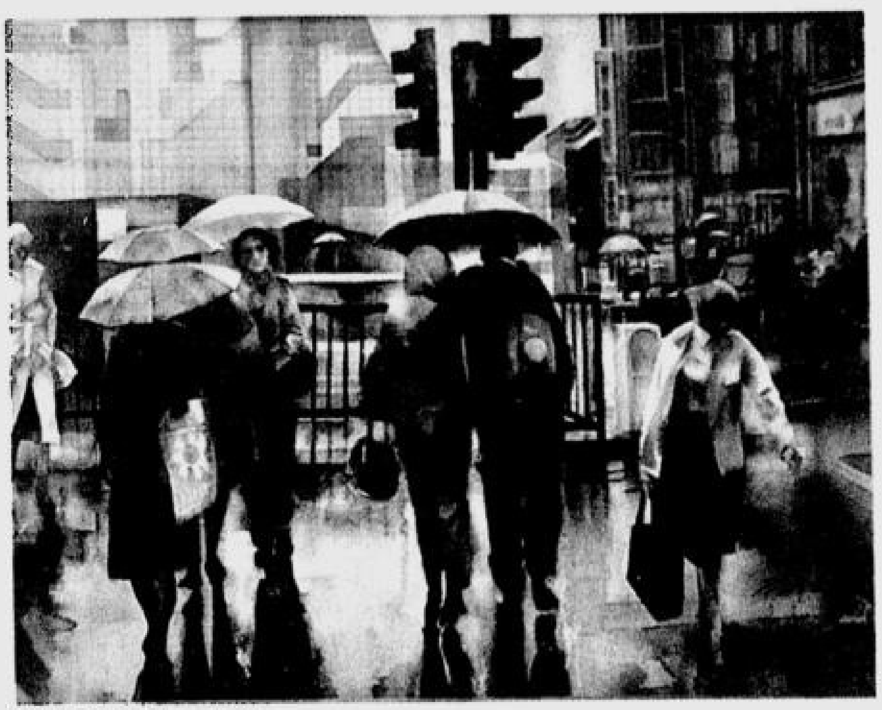
Robby Tantingco, director of the Center, said that this is the first time Manansala's works are put on display in his home province.

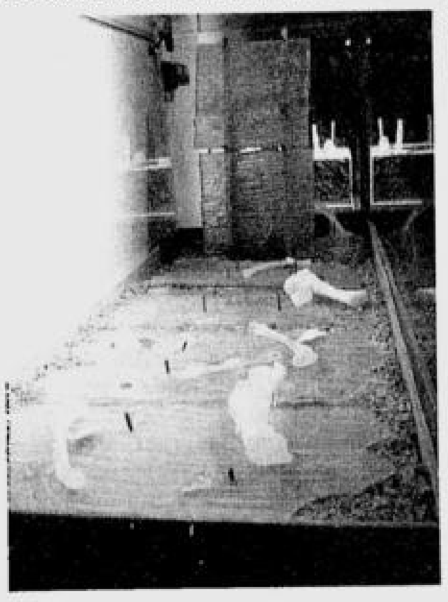
Manansala was only 4 years old when he and his parents relocated to Intramuros in 1914. He worked as a mess boy aboard an international liner and upon returning, studied fine arts in Univesity the the Philippines.

After World War II, Manansala organized an artists' group who called themselves Thirteen Moderns. Members included Hernando Ocampo, Cesar Legaspi, Alfredo Roces and Anita Magsaysay Ho—all known for their contemporary approach as against the realistic style prevalent among painters at the time.

Manansala was conferred the Republic Cultural Heritage Award in 1963. He received his National Artist award after his death on Aug. 22, 1981.

The paintings are under the custody of Roland Buan, representative of the owner.


"STREETS of London"

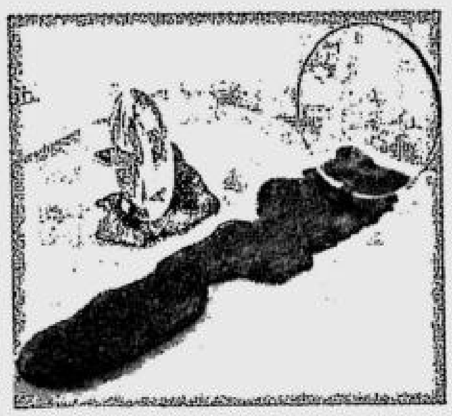

"VESSEL: Fragments," installation using cast glass

Noëll EL Farol featured in Japan Expo

ONGOING at Seto City Art Museum of Aichi Ken is the International Ceramic and Glass Art Exhibition of invited 27 ceramic artists and four glass artists from all over the world as part of Japan EXPO 2005 celebration. The exhibit is titled "Ceramic and Glass works from Artist-in-Residence in Seto."

Included in the exhibit are cast glass works produced by sculptor Noëll EL Farol during an open studio glass demonstration in Seto Ceramics and Glass Art Center held last April. EL Farol represented Philippines.

Farol's participation is sponsored by Metrobank Foundation. Japan Expo 2005 runs until Sept. 30.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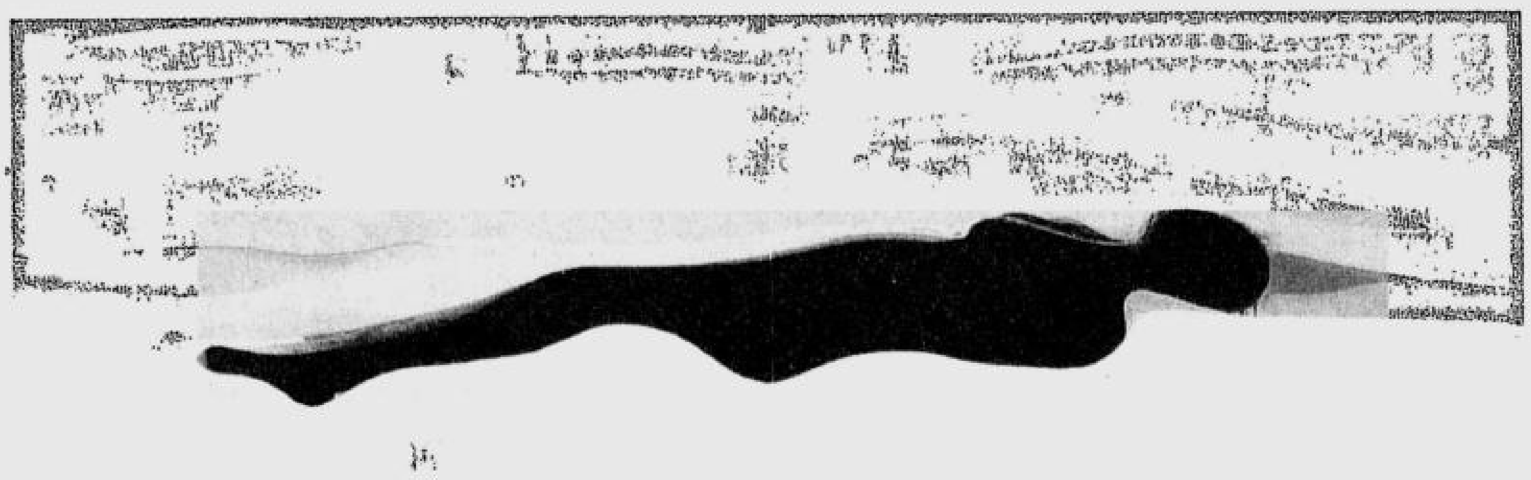


"MYSTIC Banquet Trip"

Beauty and sadness

By Constantino C. Tejero

MAYA Muñoz creates deeply reflective pieces out of apparently insubstantial forms and flat unmodulated colors à la Wesselmann, Rosenquist and other Pop artists.

Most of the pieces look no more than magazine illustrations, the pictorial field comprising nothing but color planes. The landscapes are without much depth or perspective, the human figures mere silhouettes and invariably faceless—yet each piece has a meditative quality about it.

That's so far as we can see in Muñoz's third solo exhibit "Silencio," 17 pieces in acrylic on tag board, until May 17 in The Drawing Room at Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City.

In "Rawis Beach" and "Cantille Moderato," two versions of the same brooding seascape in various tones of gray (smoke, mist, charcoal), the artist conjures utter desolation through pure line and monochrome alone.

A similar purity of line can be seen in "This Is California 95148," and desolation also prevails. But whereas in the first two pieces there's a sense of loss and despair, here it is one of serenity and beauty that's evoked by the pale-yellow beach and the turquoise sea and sky. The subtle interplay of colors and the clean undulating lines suggest a momentary peace and the fragility of beauty.

Almost a copy of it is "Mystic Banquet Trip," but for a black silhouette of a nude supine on the yellow sand. Drawn so its contour blends with the landscape, it is either a sunbather or a corpse.

Then there are the faceless portraits. "Self" is the most audacious, supposedly a self-portrait, showing the black silhouette of a body in profile against a brown background and a face that's nothing but an oval hole of brilliant red.

"Kate" is a woman in pink against deep blue, while written overhead is: *Kate with black hair and blue eyes... the pale complexion of lovers.* Except that the eyes, as well as the mouth, have been obliterated by gray smearing.

"Marie" is a vivid portrait of a pale-yellow oval of a head on a mustard-green neck with ripe-yellow arms and a turquoise blouse against a mandarin-orange background.

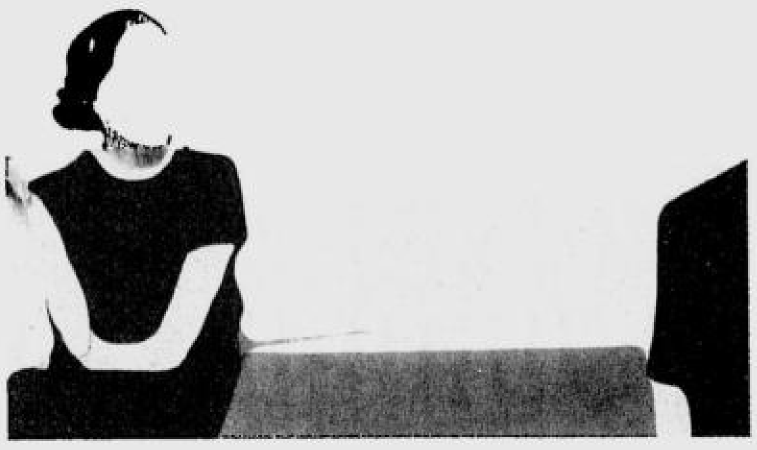
"Somebody Nobody" is more confounding, as the viewer cannot make out what he's seeing, whether it is the blank face or the back of the head of the subject.

The rest of the paintings is a series of silhouettes of interacting human figures, where they are posed side by side, at a distance, one abreast of another, fusing, or turning their backs on one another: "Eclipse" 1-3, "Farewell to Orpheus" 1-3, "After," "2004."

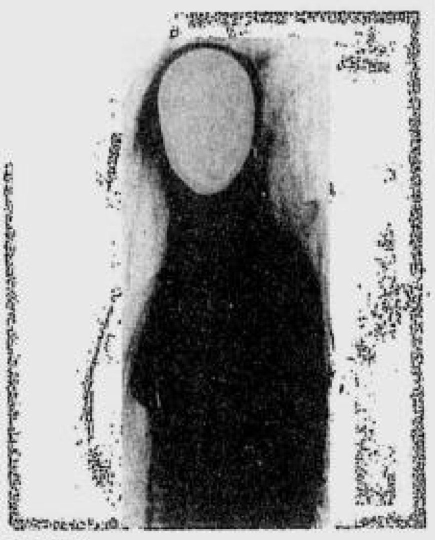
A diptych depicting what could be a complex emotional state is "It Cannot Be Helped, My Love," but the viewer is deprived of seeing the woman's interesting facial expression.

Muñoz took up her art studies, with emphasis on 3D space and design, at San José State University in California. A native of Bicol, she spent 20 years in the United States, where she must have experienced the angst in these simply drawn yet disturbing images.

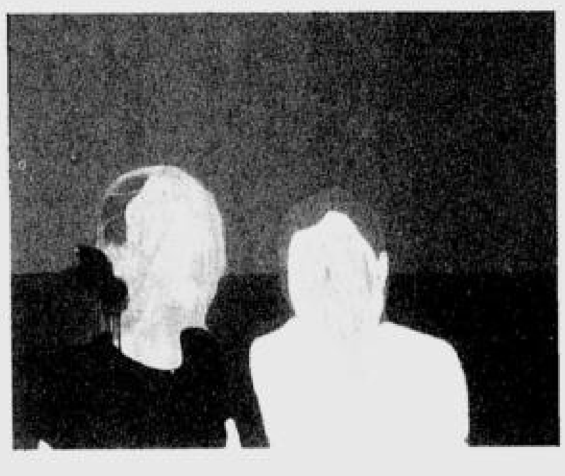
The whole exhibit is a poetic portrayal of silences, intense moments of introspection, anxiety and depression, loneliness and alienation. It is the transformative power of art that can turn such sadness into beauty.



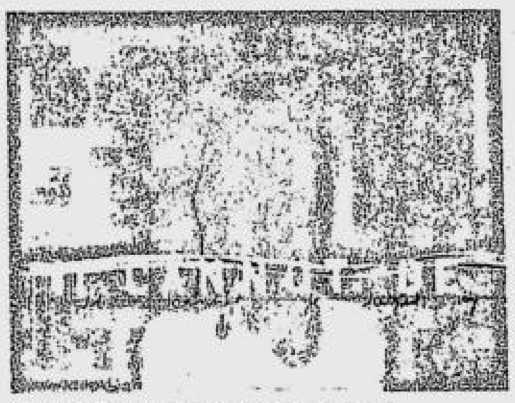
"2004"



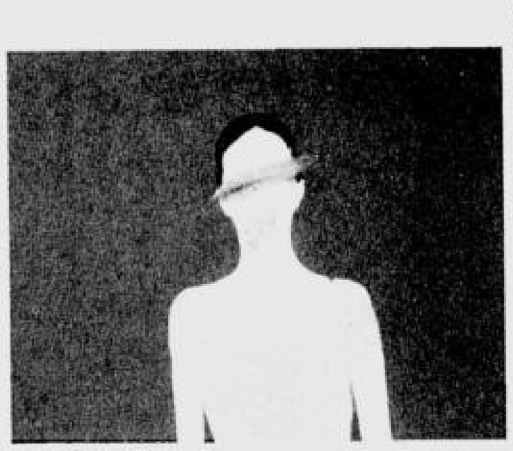
"SELF"



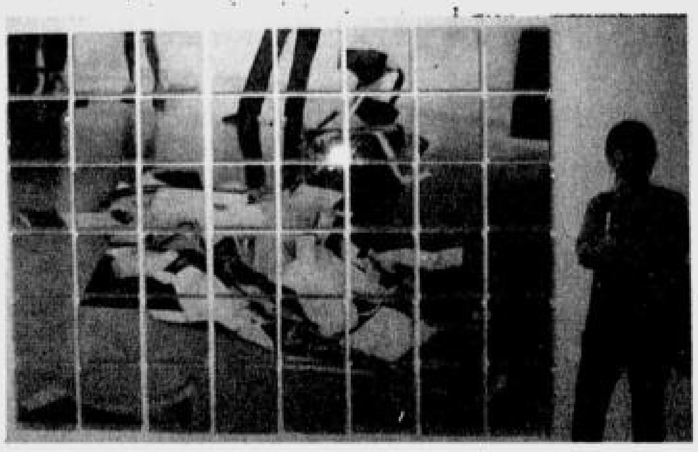
"AFTER"



"IT CANNOT Be Helped, My Love"



"KATE"



ANNIE Cabigting during the exhibition

In memory of criticism exiled

An exhibit relives the Chabet-Duldulao 'wrestling' match in 1973

By Carina Evangelista
Contributor

PERHAPS because photography was already in place for nearly a century—bringing into circulation black-and-white pictures of wars, presidential inaugurations, and other newsworthy events—before color was introduced to the technology in 1935, truth is much more associated with black-and-white photography or film than color.

Annie Cabigting's recent exhibition at Finale Art Gallery (SM Megamall Artwalk) is a study of truth, history, memory and myth in 100 black-and-white pieces.

Four components based on a single image comprise the exhibition: a grid of square canvases that altogether shows a photorealist painting of torn pieces of paper spilling out of a waste basket; a slew of oil-on-canvas cutouts glued to wood featuring the full-length figure in varying, sizes of the same woman in '60s garb and holding pen to paper; five miniature "nesting" canvases that replicate the same image stacked one on top of the other abutting from a small corner; and a book laid open to the page referencing the photograph of the image that's multiplied, cropped, gridded and silhouetted in oil in the three other elements. The woman in the cutouts can be seen left of center in the photograph.

At this point, there's no escaping the open page to find out why this image merits such replication. The image source is from Manuel Duldulao's "Philippine Art Scene."

The accompanying paragraph describes the piece exhibited by Roberto Chabet in "An Exhibition of Objects" held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 1973. Chabet ripped into pieces the book "Contemporary Philippine Art" (also by Duldulao) and poured the torn pages into a waste basket.

Cabigting said of this piece: "I've heard so many stories and versions you could not believe about Sir Chabet's work, 'Tearing to Pieces,' over the years-discussed in the classroom, mentioned at openings, talked about across the table over beer bottles, and, more recently, [mentioned by] someone who was there to see the work."

By painting and re-painting in almost 100 pieces, she pieces together the work that was torn to pieces. And the tiny nesting canvases are like the visual reverberations of the event of which various permutations have echoed over the decades.

Duldulao's book description of Chabet's tearing Duldulao's other book concludes thus: "The 1,000-books-sold-in-10-years-jinx that haunted other volumes in the past was finally broken. A thousand copies of 'Contemporary Philippine Art' were sold in exactly 10 days."

Remember, it was 1973. At a time when freedom of expression was not free, perhaps mythmaking was the merry medium in the land of martial law. An artist critiques perchance the book, perchance the travesty of art dancing under a dictatorship. An artist tears up a book that must have had the seal of government approval to critique the government's quashing of any form of criticism right in the exhibition space built by the government.

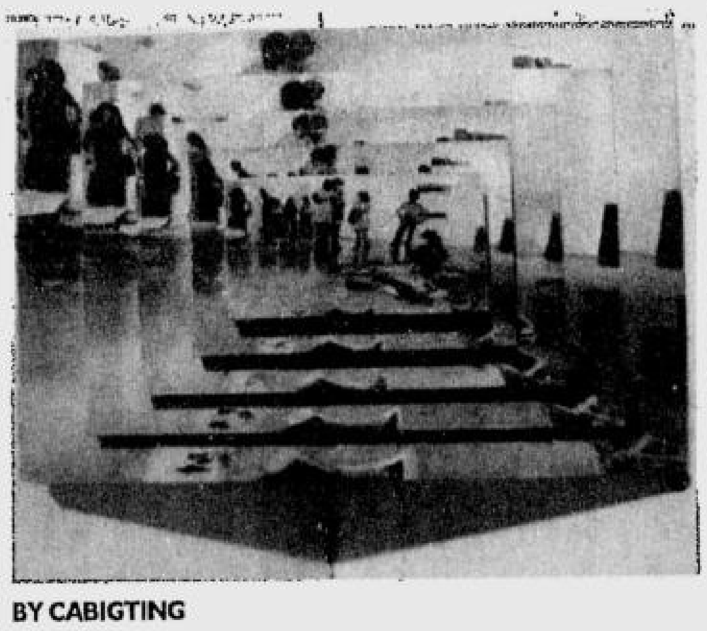
The woman in the '60s dress takes the stance of the critic, taking notes about this artist's tantrum-like critique of criticism banned by the New Society: What we would do now to have a copy of those notes. In the estimation of this critic, is this installation by an artist who might have suggested that the book is crap itself crappy art?

Cabigting calls her approach a "postmodern appropriation" of the document of an event in Philippine art history, but it goes beyond appropriation. The event, while legendary, has lived in people's imagination in anecdotal form (verbal), not as an image (visual).

The practice of postmodern appropriation relies heavily on the iconic currency of the image appropriated. Chabet himself did not recognize the image upon attending Cabigting's opening until he saw the book and remarked at Cabigting's reconstruction of his deconstruction, or, as he texted, "de-deconstruction."

No one knows who the mystery woman is but she has been multiplied and, if dispersed to different collectors, she will hang on many a wall forever taking notes, 'documenting.'

Cabigting refers to the document of an art event as part of "the history of the art itself." In this case, she re-documents the document and the documentor. Three decades hence, the whole thing is myth and memory recharged in multiple monochrome.



BY CABIGTING

Santo and Villaruel at Mag:Net, . . .

From page C8

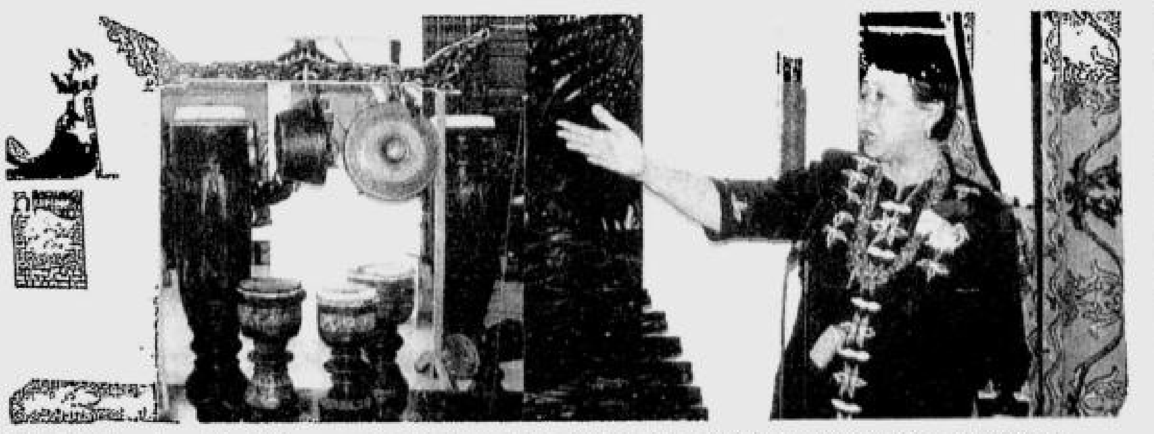
artists are Dan Libor, Nardz Zepeda, Teody Racuya, Roger Crisostomo, Rey Conmigo, Buji Blancaflor, Elmer Gernale and Oscar Quevedo. Call 5272113.

GALERIA de las Islas mounts Leo Marquiala's "Sicayab" until May 31 at the 3/F, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. The exhibit represents the artist's social realistic approach in interpreting the people of Sicayab, his home town in Zamboanga del Norte. Call 5272113.

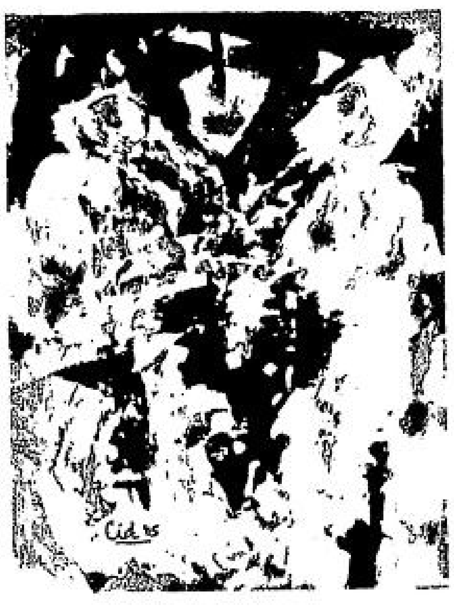
IN "A Walk through Magical Zen Realities," Priscilla Teodoro shows furniture art using eggshells, watermelon seeds, onion skin and rice husks and batik on silk paintings. The show is ongoing until June 15 at the Clubhouse, Mayfield Park, beside Makro, Imelda Avenue, Pasig.

AYALA Museum will hold the symposium "Manila, World Entrepot: 16th-19th Century Exchange of Objects Between Asia, Europe and the Americas" on July 8-10. The three-day symposium will focus on the linkages and exchange of objects and influences between Asia, Europe and the Americas during the 400-year Spanish colonial period and early American colonial period in the Philippines. Registration is ongoing. Call 7577117.

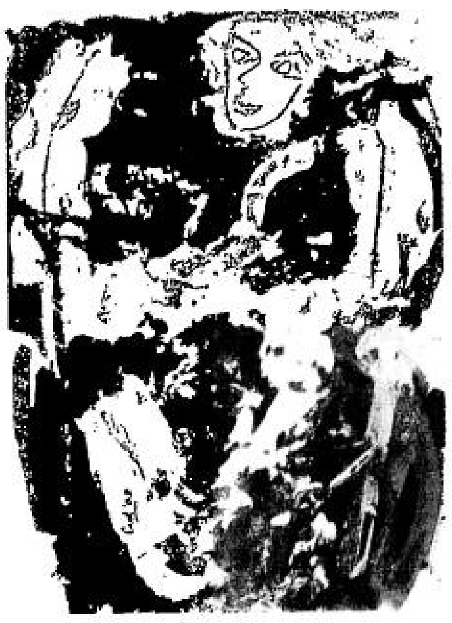
A JOINT exhibit of Rene Quiroz and Editha Mata-Guerrero is shown until June 9 at Le Soufflé, Amorsolo Tower, Rockwell Center, Makati. Quiroz is a realist with an impressionistic style and lively colors, Guerrero a modernist who uses palette knife in conventional decorative pattern with brilliant hues. Both are members of Ugnayan '80, alumni artists of University of Santo Tomas.



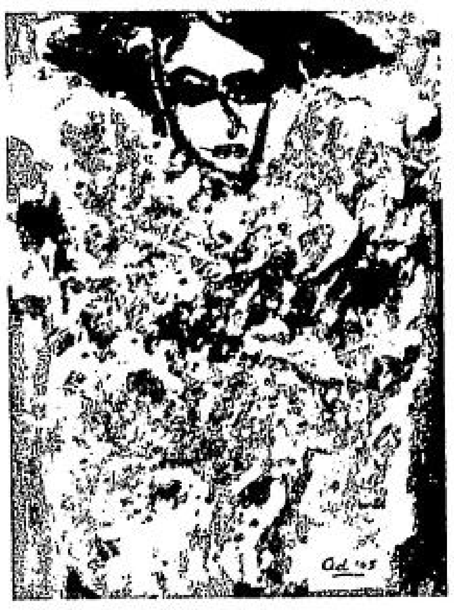
THE RICH cultural traditions, musical instruments, dances and antiquities of Mindanaoans (left) are showcased during the recent launching of National Heritage Month in Davao City. NCCA executive director and PA on culture Cecile Guidote Alvarez (right) opens the Davao exhibit for National Heritage Month, declared by President Macapagal-Arroyo through Proclamation No. 439.



"BLUE Lady"



"DEBUTANTE"



"HOMAGE to Pacita Abad"

Awash in abstraction, aloft in expressionism

CID Reyes and his new works, which merge abstractions with the female figure

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THIS show is Cid Reyes' 11th solo exhibit, an event that also marks the first time he has attempted to merge his abstractionist temper with his emerging figurative leanings.

For the art critic-turned-painter, the visual fusion does not come easy: It may prove unsettling to those whose tastes run along the strictly abstract or the uncompromisingly figurative.

But artists, being what they essentially are, can and do switch roles and bend rules if they so wish and if they are overcome by the spirit of experimentation.

The recently concluded "Demoiselles de Manille," at the West Gallery in SM Megamall, is also quite head-turning, if one considers the frenzied and frenetic manner by which the artist has gone to town with the paint medium.

Unbelievably thick impastos, bold gashes, atypical color mixtures—all these combine with the faces of women dominant in our matriarchal society, from society matrons in their dazzling finery to lady politicians clawing their way to the top of the political echelon.

There are also tributes to well-known women artists, most notably the late Pacita Abad, who remained until her death the epitome of hyperactivity.

Reyes, whose erudition as a critic is widely known, has both foreign and homegrown models to bear on this sudden shift of imagery. The references are of course, alluded to in the titles, and clearly suggestive of Picasso, De Kooning, our own BenCab, and, as the colors explode and implode, the late José Joya, who is credited for bringing to this country the full impact of the New York School of Abstract Expressionism.

To fully appreciate Reyes' disarming exploration of both color and texture, one must allow himself or herself moments of deep immersion in the world of abstraction, ready to imbibe the allied principles of intellect and emotion, of reason and intuition, design and chance.

One also has to be prepared to appreciate the female principle as it applies in the continuing quest for power and domination, and judging by the way many women have found their way into every door of the body politic, starting from beauty queens who married well to beauteous First Ladies who were their husbands' secret weapons.

There are new elements that have sprung in the new oeuvre of Reyes. Instead of mellowing in time and with age, the artist is in the habit of pulling surprises, not the least of which is his ability to incorporate visually enhancing properties to his canvases.

Thus, the image can be encrusted with gold to evoke a gilded character to his subject, or an obliquely drawn blue line to suggest the Blue Lady who has not totally faded out from the scene, or the swirling costumes of Filipinas caught at the turn of the century.

And not to be missed out are the artist's most fervid twists and turns in Abstract Expressionism, armed with an evocatively endearing insight into its happy marriage with figuration.

Bravo, Ang Kiukok!

With the death of Ang Kiukok, Philippine art has lost one of its most loyal and principled disciples, particularly in the field of Expressionism, where he excelled in.

Having lived to the ripe age of 74, and weakened by prostate cancer, Ang had his retrospective (including new and recent works) a few months ago at the Art Center in SM Megamall, an exhibit which showed in its most graphic terms his endearing passion for his chosen iconography.

Beneath the quiet, solitary and misunderstood persona, Ang had, in fact, a most passionate temper, who dared to translate his personal beliefs and the collective follies of a nation forever teetering on madness.

Like his proverbial mad dogs and beaten icons, the art of Ang Kiukok was centered on the marginalized, the dispossessed, the true outcasts of society.

I had the rare privilege of Ang's company right after the publication of his tome by his avid collector, Paulino Que, and soon after his proclamation as National Artist in 2001 (of which I was part, having participated in the Council of Peers that year).

In his most unguarded moments, it was a different person I saw, with his wife and loved ones by his side. He struck me as special human being—caring, committed to his causes, and, despite his Chinese roots, unequivocally more Filipino than most of us.

Our deepest condolences to his bereaved family, and to the nation that has lost its most loyally expressive artist. May his art live forever!

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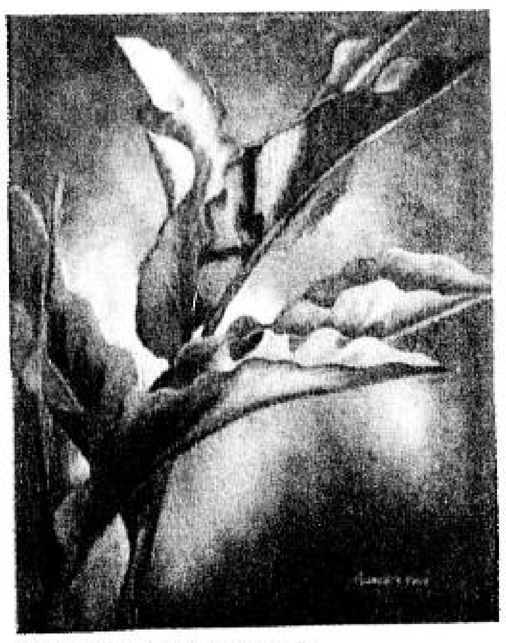
Arte Pintura holds group exhibit



"FOLIAGE," by Rey Aurelio

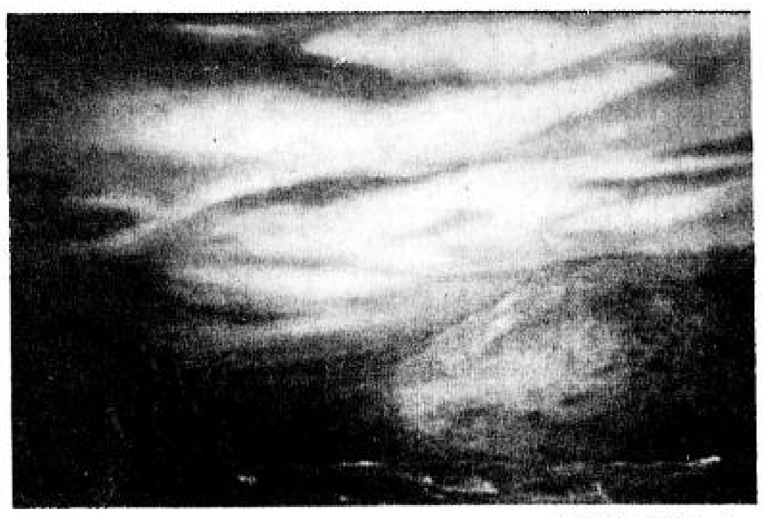
THE ARTE Pintura visual artist group will hold the exhibit, "Variations," at the Rennaisance Gallery (SM Megamall) on June 1-12. The group is headed by Addie Cukingnan with Azor Pazcoguin, Rey Ademis, Jessie Martin, Tony Yusi, Abelardo Pasigado, Betty Luz Chua, Shirley Tan, Rey Aurelio and Debbie Ann Tan as members.

"Variations", will be for the benefit of the Messiah College Foundation, Inc.

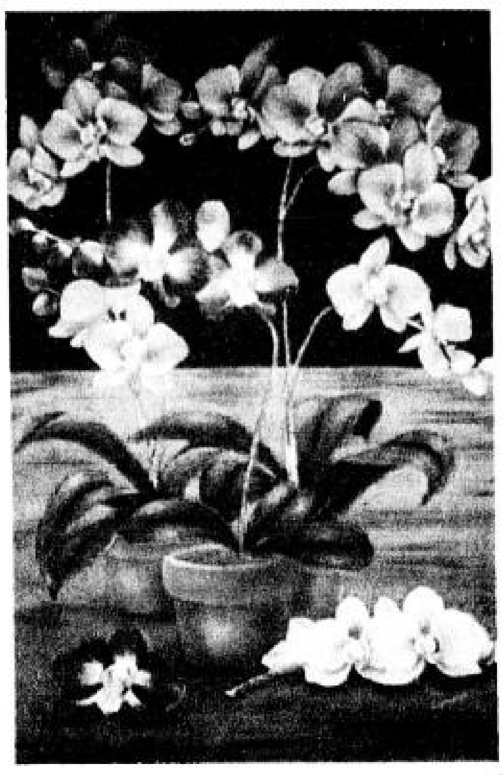
Arte Pintura started in 1997 and has exhibited in various museums and galleries around Metro Manila. Cukingnan and Pazcoguin exhibited in New York in 2003. In 2002, Arte Pintura was given the Dr. Jose Rizal Memorial Award for excellence in the culture and the arts.

In 2003, the Arte Pintura Gallery was opened at the Kitaro Building (2/L, Shaw Boulevard and Wack Wack Road, Mandaluyong City). The place is also home to the group's Saturday painting workshops open to all art enthusiasts. The group has also given workshops to art aspirants with mental disabilities and physical limitations. It also done charity projects with Unicef, Silong Tanglaw Foundation, Alay Kapwa, Millenium Foundation, PGH Children's Wards and various parish churches.

Call 7266542 or visit http://arte_pintura.tripod.com



"SUNSET" Series, by Shirley Tan



"ORCHIDS Galore," by Addie Cukingnan

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Hermisanto and Villaruel at Mag:net, Robles at Duemila

VISUAL ARTS

MAG:NET Paseo showcases Hermisanto's "Perang Pinoy" on May 19-31 at Paseo de Roxas, Makati. The artist makes foray into the Filipino psyche, focusing on currency. Call 8177895.

AT MAG:NET Quezon City, Alvin Villaruel turns to astronomy books as sources of his new paintings in "New General Catalog," to probe into what constitutes knowable realms and what can be deduced from the immensity of available knowledge. Exhibit opens at 6:30 p.m. on May 17. Call 4100995.

GALLERIA Duemila in Megamall mounts Roberto Robles' "New Works on Paper" until May 29. The artist combines calligraphy with gestural marks. The works are largely monochromatic. Rich stone grays and ink black are dominant, with ochre as secondary hue. Call 6343261 or 8319990.

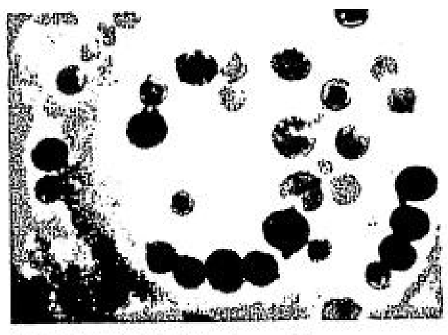
THE CRUCIBLE Gallery in Megamall presents Antonio Mondejar's exhibition of sculptures on May 17-29. The artist pays homage to his favorite subject—the human figure in various moods and poses.

THE PHILIPPINE Center presents "Faces, Places and Things" by Emi Mercado and Tessie Dichupa until May 20 in New York City. Mercado combines drama and painting in her works while Dichupa portrays landscapes, flowers and shells.

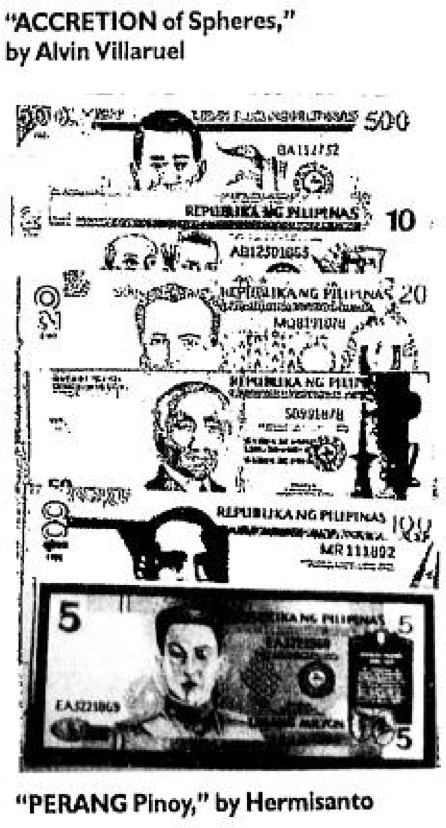
GALERIA de las Islas features the floral paintings of the Aquarellists Group on May 20-June 31, at 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Call 5272113.

"COLOUR Outburst" by the Las Piñas Artists Society is ongoing until May 31 at Galeria de las Islas in Intramuros, Manila. Participating

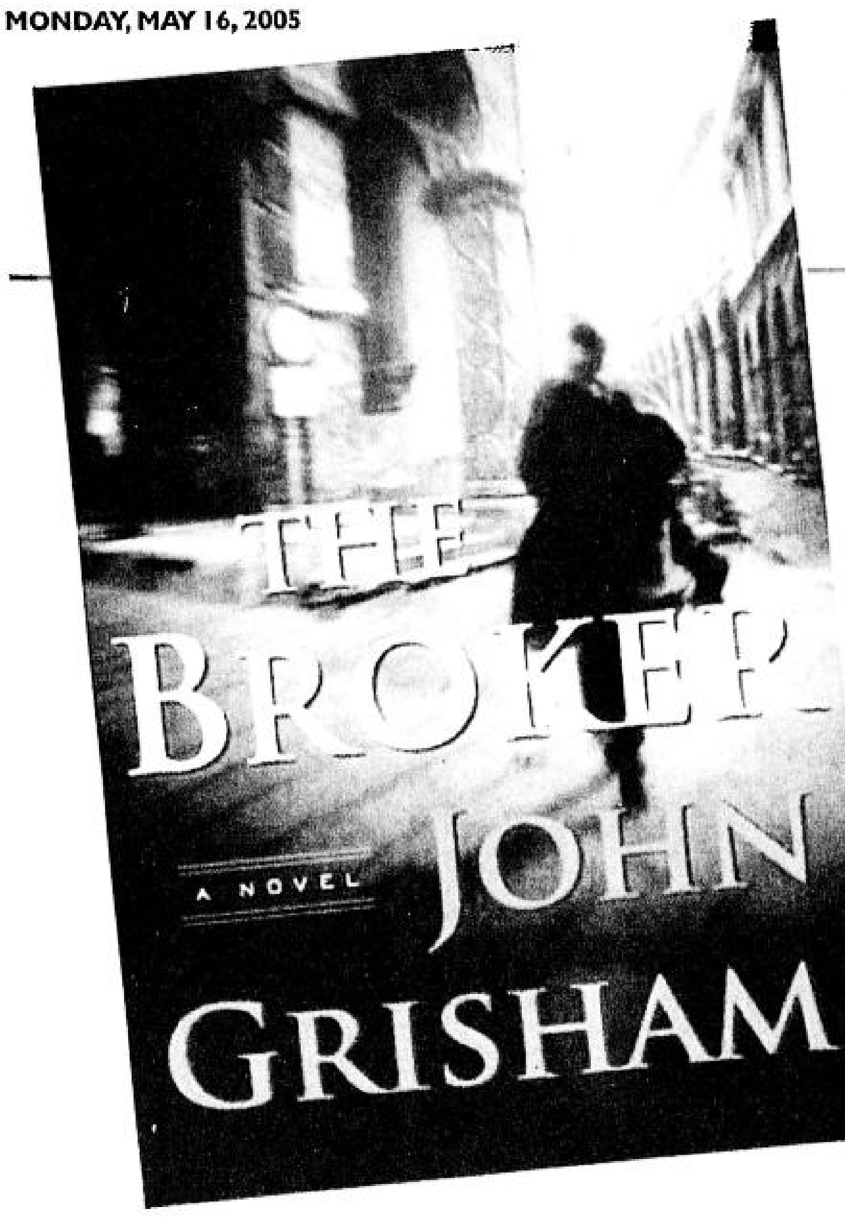
SANTO/ C6



"ACCRETION of Spheres," by Alvin Villaruel



"PERANG Pinoy," by Hermisanto



The name's Grisham, John Grisham

The spying life of 'The Broker' proves to be too difficult for the best-selling writer of courtroom thrillers

"The Broker"
By John Grisham
Doubleday, New York
2005, 357 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

NOT TO overstretch a pun derived from the title of his latest book, but if John Grisham wanted to go for broke, he could not have gone far from what he did well.

After attracting a huge readership with the success of "The Firm" and "The Pelican Brief," Grisham's courtroom thrillers had, at one point, run into a bit of a creative restraining order, though they remained hugely popular.

Then Grisham simply decided to change tactics and his work became refreshingly daring, to a variety of results. He could be magnificently literary (the textured portrait of Americana that was "A Painted House") or edge-of-the-table interesting (the old town mystery of "The Last Juror").

Then again, he could also be on the injured list (the jaundiced sports clunker "The Bleachers"). His sudden inclination for adventure often only featured a bit of lawyering or a lawyer as a lead character but not in his traditional courtroom showdowns.

Grisham does well when he stretches but not when he overreaches.

"The Broker," Grisham's 18th novel, overreaches and then some. While there are some charming portions, Grisham's stab at international spy adventuring is for the most part glacially slow and rather uneventful, both of which, it has to be clarified, are not good qualities as far as international spy tomes are concerned.

"The Broker" of the title is Joel Backman, once a powerful Washington, DC lawyer who, due to a deal gone awry, wound up in prison with several of his clients finding up dead. When a lame-duck president pardons Backman at the last minute, it sets off a chain of events that turns Backman into a free man as well as a target for some of the world's deadliest assassins.

Thrown into a new identity in Italy but watched closely, Backman is the bait in a very dangerous game but being who he is, Backman isn't exactly helpless bait.

Clever

What follows is a clever portrait of how people in hiding could potentially get back at those chasing him. After all, Backman just has to elude the CIA, FBI, Mossad and the Chinese

THE NAME'S/ D4

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Drink your way to a slimmer you!

Most of us live a sedentary life. This work - eat - sleep - work routine without physical activities such as exercise is not a choice that we make but a situation created by the fast-paced lifestyle we all have. A typical yuppie's world revolves around building up a good portfolio for better career opportunities in the future. Thus, putting his/her health conditions at the backseat.

But as time goes by, health becomes an issue that starts with an annoying weight gain problem. This is true especially for Filipinos because we are extremely vain and particular with having perfect curves at the right places. It is typical to get comments or compliments on one's figure as a greeting. Nowadays, men are becoming more conscious about their bodies. Belly bulges and unsightly flabs are not macho anymore like before. As a matter of fact there have been studies showing that men are willing to follow a work-out plan or drink slimming pills for leaner bodies. But as some slimming pills have harmful side effects while gym work-outs eat much of one's precious time and money as well, men are left with no other option than to go under the knife. But why resort to a costly, professionally altered body when slimming down can become a lifestyle in itself?

Drinking tea, specifically green tea is proven helpful in ridding the body of unwanted fats and bad cholesterol. Experts believe that green tea, though categorized as food in the market, gives healthful benefits to men.

Gang Xian Herbal Tea for Men, a new product from the makers of Kankunis, a well-established slimming tea for women, is now out in the market. It contains three types of Camellia sinensis, a known slimming ingredient in the market today. With the combined strength of Camellia sinensis of Wulong tea, Kung ting tea and To tea, one is assured of great results in no time.

Aside from helping one get a better shape, Gang Xian's ingredients have beneficial health benefits to men. Wulong tea acts as an anti-ageing agent, blood pressure stabilizer and immune system booster. It also improves the digestive system and prevents heart diseases. Kung Ting tea has anti-oxidant properties that help fight against cancer. It is also an effective agent that lowers cholesterol level, restrains the growth of bacteria and reduces the risk of blood vessel blocking and heart attacks. While To tea is known to reduce the cholesterol levels in the body.

The concoction also contains Cassia obtusifolia which contain emodin, a form of laxative making it a good remedy for chronic constipation. The ingredient also lowers the plasma cholesterol, prevents formation of atherosclerotic plaque in the arterial wall and lowers the blood pressure level. Folium Nelumbinis is known to be responsible for dispersing excess heat and increased body energy. The Chrysanthemum leaves contain a longer anti-hypertensive effect. Its traditional therapeutic and weight maintenance. This tea is also for metrosexuals, the new breed of men in the Philippines who are very conscious of their bodies.

Gang Xian does not need any prescription because it is made of natural ingredients. It is available in cans of 30 teabags at **P398.00**. There are also trial packs of 5s at **P66.00**.

Gang Xian Herbal Tea for Men is available in all leading drugstores & supermarkets nationwide. It is distributed by **REJ Diamond Pharmaceuticals, Inc.** located at Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City.
For inquiries, e-mail *rejpharma@tri-isys.com.ph.*

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SAWIKAAN

Words that capture our world

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANTHONY MISTADES

A new contest aims to come up with the Word of the Year

By Romulo P. Baquiran Jr.
Contributor

NEW WORDS capture contemporary realities. Or is it the realities that produce new words? Whatever the case, words and realities go together. And we remember the world—our world—through popular and usually catchy words.

"Metrosexual" and "blingbling" are such catch words. These have recently become part of the American English vocabulary. A few years back, metrosexual was known only among the fashionable white male professionals and blingbling among avantgarde hiphop artists. By the way, for the unaware, metrosexuals are males who do not give a hoot about being identified as being overly concerned with personal grooming and fashion. Blingblings are flashy personal effects and accessories.

Filipino catch words are just as colorful. Teenagers nowadays spike conversations with *tsika*, *tsugi* and jolog as if their lives depend on these words. And what about the not so young? They should be proud to be the makers of such enduring words like *astig*, *hanep* and *bangag*.

New words first circulate in a subculture as an expression of its identity. If the word is catchy enough, it will spill into the larger community. *Tsika* started in the mid 1980s among the *bagets* and it meant then as "to engage in small talk." It still does but its connotation has widened to include "to entertain," "to treat a task lightly," "to convince somebody by slick talk," "to be a member of a social group," etc.

Offensive

Take offense when somebody tags you as *tsaka*, *tsapter* or worst, *tsugi*. These are variations of the adjective "ugly." It actually means "*Ang pangit-pangit.*" Remember that popular 1980s song "I Feel For You?" It was performed on MTV by Chaka Khan. She had frizzy hair, bee-bitten lips, shiny black skin and all the features of a black, which some Filipinos, in teasing mood, would not consider as attributes of the beautiful. This is *tsaka*'s etymology. *Tsapter* is respelled chapter. When such a moniker adheres to a person, it only means that he is out of the game. His chapter in the grand narrative is over. *Tsugi*'s roots is most likely onomatopeic, as it resembles the awful thud of a heavy blade hitting a chopping board.

Words that refer to significant social experiences tend to endure. *Astig* (reversed "*tigas*") seemed assured of a place in our linguistic shelf. The young still uses it with much gusto as the *jeproks* did. Will jolog have the same staying power as *baduy*? Or will it go the way of *bakya*, quaint as the wooden clogs of long ago?

At the moment, *ukay* looms on the everyday life of the Filipino. From the words *hukay* and *halukay*, "to dig" and "to stir vigorously," it refers to the preferred purchase of inexpensive second hand artefacts, both by the moneyed and the financially challenged. Laundry soap commercials have made it more popular and introduced the euphemistic version "Made in UK."

Word watch

In the United States, the American Linguistic Society (ALS) have been doing word watch for decades. Each year, the members meet in a general assembly to discuss what words from the previous year captured the spirit of the times. From the long and then the short list, members pick out which ones can vie for the title "Word of the Year." "Metrosexual," "blingbling," and "shock and awe" are recent winners.

Inspired by the ALS activity, Filipinas Institute of Translation (FIT), in cooperation with the UP Institute of Creative Writing, Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas, UP Sentro ng Wikang Filipino and the Ople Foundation sponsors Sawikaan: Salita ng Taon. FIT held the first "Word of the Year" forum in August 2004. A pre-event selection was made by asking language experts, scholars and enthusiasts to identify potential "word of the year" words and advocate the campaign for them to be chosen as such. Candidate words must be popular and express the significant experiences from previous year.

Democracy and 'canvass'

In the 2004 Sawikaan held in August at the UP Bulwagang Rizal, "canvass" won over the other 14 candidates. Randy David of the Sociology Department presented the paper that expounded on the importance of canvass to ensure the survival of democracy in the country. *Ukay-ukay* as written by UP Baguio Professor Delfin Tolentino won second place while *tsugi* by Dr. Roland B. Tolentino and *tsika* by comedian Ate Glow (Rene Facunla) shared the third place. The winners received more than P20,000 in cash prizes.

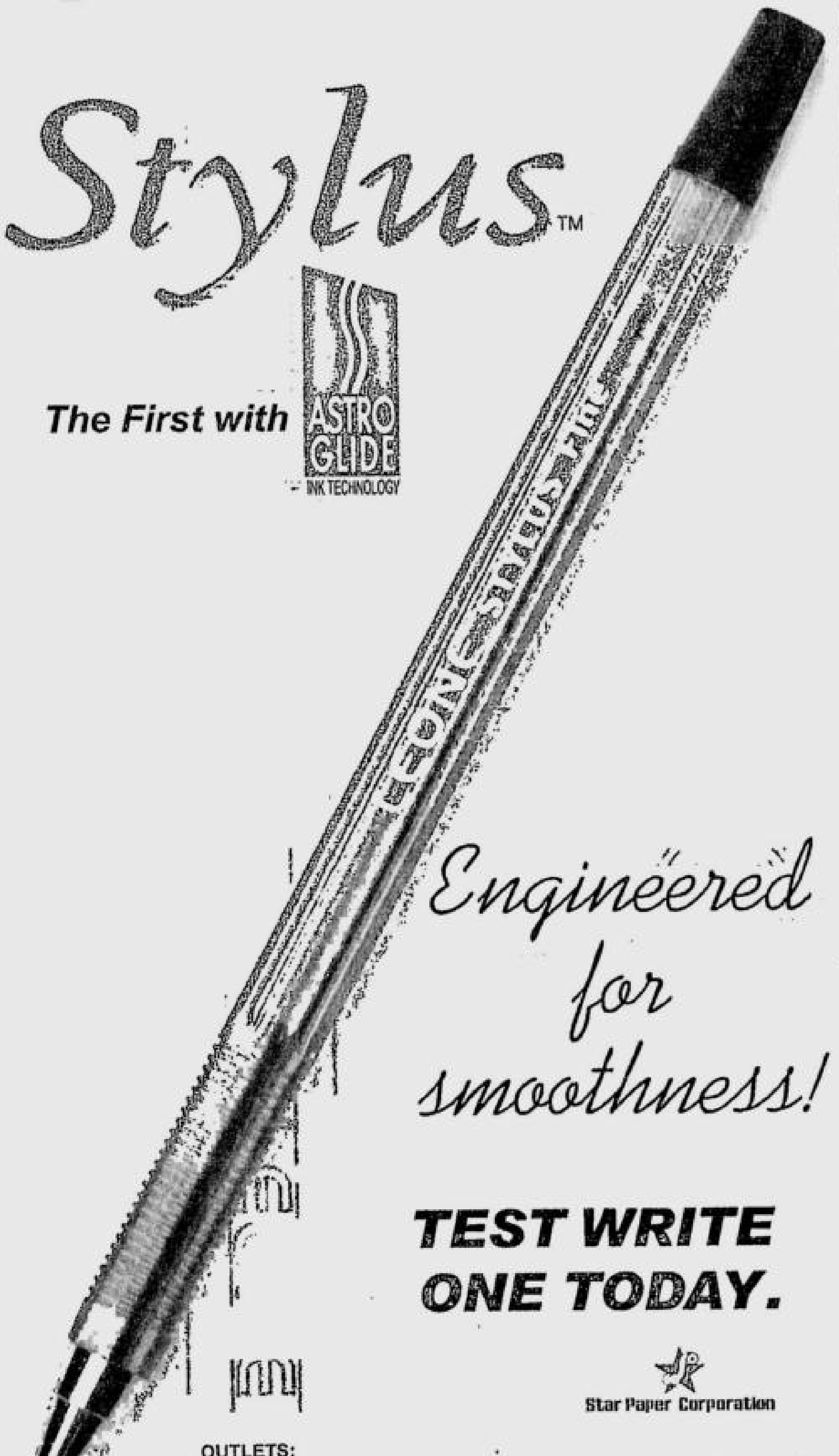
Students, teachers and language enthusiasts were surprised at the diverse and rich discussions on words considered common and even pedestrian. As expected, performance artist Vim Nadera's presentation was most engaging. He went out of his way to become the actual embodiment of the "*ukay*" crowd, donning all sorts of accessories from the ubiquitous second hand stores. *Salbakuta*, *tapsilog*, *dagdag-bawas*, *terorista*, *jolog* and fashionista took center stage and assumed positions that reflect the life and times, the psychology, the politics and the world-view of the Filipino. These words really express the heart and the head of the common mind believes in. FIT has found a worthy project to uphold the ideals of the Buwan ng Wika.

Word contest

FIT is gearing up for the 2005 Sawikaan: Word of the Year. Scholars and language enthusiasts are encouraged to watch out for potential words and submit these as nominations with the appropriate essay. For inquiries and submissions, interested parties can e-mail filipinas.translation@gmail.com. A new component is added to this year's program. Country experiences on the development of a national language will be shared by scholars from Malaysia, Israel and Ukraine.

The papers read in the first Sawikaan will soon be published as a book. It is hoped that awareness of the value of words could be raised by the discussions made by the fourteen writers namely luminaries like Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Dr. Bienvenido Lumbera, CCP Artist Awardee Rene O. Villanueva, Seawrite Awardee Teo T. Antonio, Randy David, Delfin Tolentino, Roland B. Tolentino, Ate Glow, Jun Balde, Boy Nicolas, Jimmuel Naval, Ruby Alcantara, Joey Baquiran, Sarah Raymundo, Michelle Ong and Alwin Aguirre.

National Artist for Literature Virgilio S. Almario writes the introduction. The book is expected to encourage participation to the Sawikaan, now an annual project of the Filipinas Institute of Translation.



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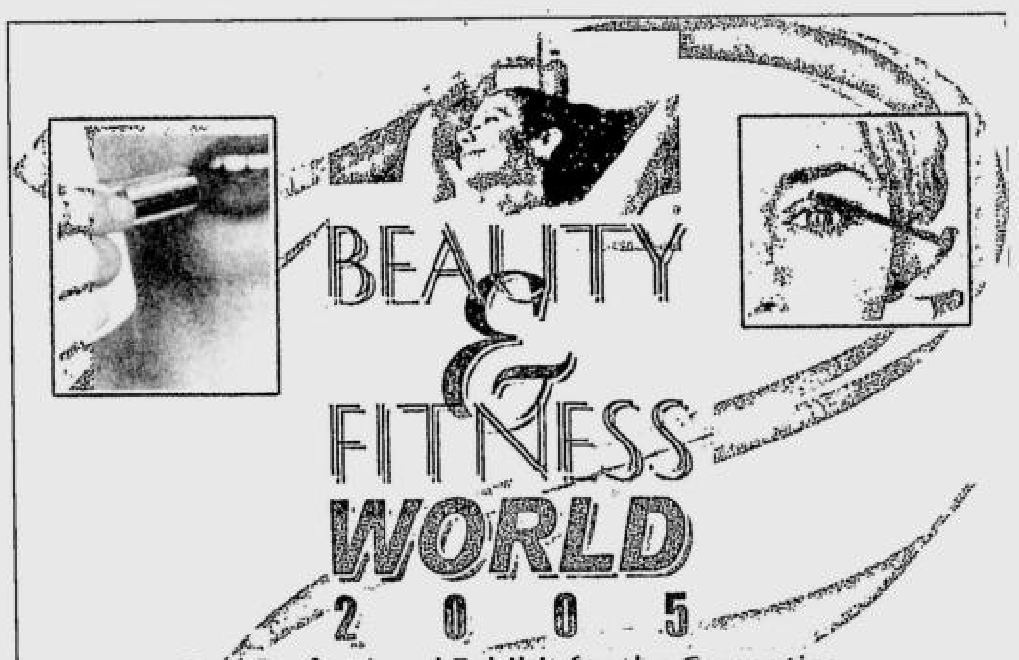

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Carbo Tame Your Life by Ani Baltazar
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Life in a Can: A Product Presentation by Oxylife International
Massage Therapy, Aromatherapy and Scar Removal by Susie's Natural Body Essentials
The All Papaya Care System: A Presentation by Silka
Body Sculpting with Mesotherapy
DAY THREE - Saturday, May 28, 2005
Morning Session:
Cologne Concoction: Do It Yourself Scents by Eunice Inc.
Eating Healthy the South Beach Way by Chef Florabel Co
Afternoon Session:
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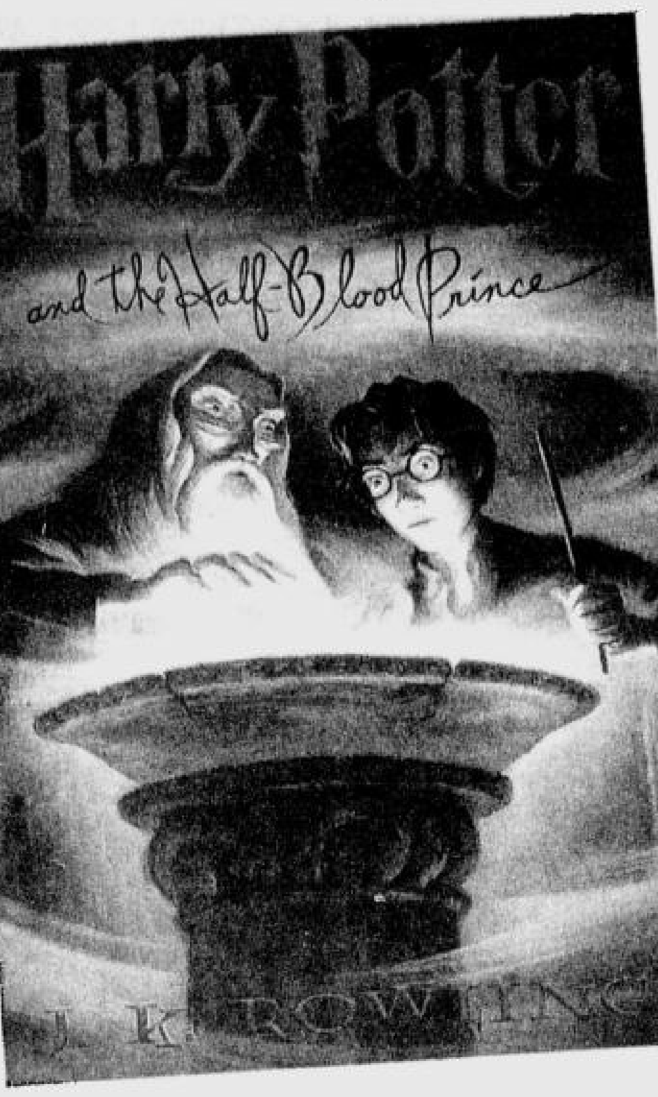
Summer concert

THE PHILIPPINE Research for Developing Instrumental Soloists (PREDIS) will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a culminating concert dubbed "Sounds of Summer," on May 22, 4 p.m. at the St. Cecilia's Hall of St. Scholastica's College (SSC) in Manila.

"Sounds of Summer" will feature the different PREDIS groups—the Little Stars, the Twinkle Stars, the Children's Ensemble and the Children's Orchestra. The PREDIS is headed by Mary Grace B. Martinez, faculty member of the SSC String Department.

To prepare for this event, the children, aged 5 to 17, participated in a six-week workshop on the theory of music, solo performing and group playing. These young musicians will share their passion for music when they perform the works of Vivaldi, Bach, Umali and other composers.

Admission is free. For inquiries, contact St. Scholastica's College at 5268080 or 5247686 loc. 288 and ask for Dimples.



Discounts and perks for Harry Potter fans

THE COUNTDOWN to the release of "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" is rapidly winding down. The sixth installment of J.K. Rowling's fascinating tale of the boy wizard will be available starting July 16, and it promises to deliver the same clever mix of fun, danger and adventure as its bestselling predecessors.

National Bookstore is offering a 10 percent discount on the book and a P100 book coupon for every reservation made on or before May 31.

At Powerbooks, every reservation made from April 1 to May 31 entitles customers to a 10 percent discount, an opportunity to receive a P100 Powerbooks gift certificate free and triple points for Powercard and Powercard Plus holders.

The free Powerbooks gift certificate, however, cannot be used as payment for "Harry Potter" books.

Readers also get the chance to own a "Harry Potter" pocket notebook and bookmark or be among the lucky winners to get a hardcover "Harry Potter" 1-5 book set in the raffle.

Hurry and reserve your copy now!

WATERCOLOR TECHNIQUES

Random House school-opening promo

JUMPSTART the new school year with "Random House References" and National Book Store. Every purchase of any Random House title worth P500, single or accumulated receipts, at any National Book Store branch nationwide until June 9 entitles you to join the Random House School Jumpstart Treat raffle promo.

Not only will Random House references feed your mind with the right information you will need for school, you could get a chance to win up to P25,000 in cash and National Book Store gift certificates.

Three winners from Metro Manila and three from the provincial branches will be chosen. Visit your nearest National Book Store.

Seminar on literature reading, teaching

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Committee on Literature, with Anvil Publishing, is conducting a summer institute on the reading and teaching of literature with a seminar entitled "Guess Who's Coming to Listen? Shaking the Reading and Teaching Grounds Beneath our Feet," on May 17-19 at the audio-visual room of the St. Raymund's (AB-Commerce) building.

This enrichment program for teachers of literature is designed to problematize the reading of literature in order to generate meaningful discoveries that will upgrade and update the literature pedagogy in the country.

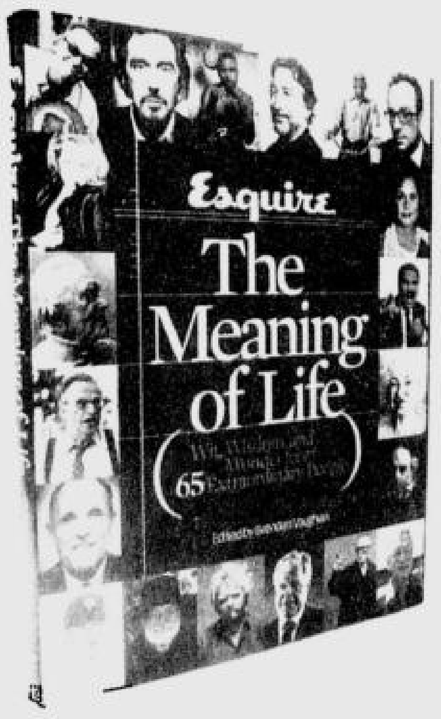
The seminar is open to literature teachers from other schools as part of UST's community outreach program. Seminar fee is only P1,500 inclusive of food and kit.

Dr. Armando de Jesus, UST's vice-rector for academic affairs, will open the seminar, while Dr. Milagros Tanlayco, professor emeritus of the Faculty of Arts and Letters, will give the keynote address, focusing on the Thomasian literature teacher.

Lectures for the plenary session will be delivered by the following: "Text Sovereignty and the Legacy of New Criticism" (Lito Zulueta); "Reading Sexuality in Literature" (Ferdinand Lopez); "Reading Films as Postmodern Text" (Joyce Arriola); "Teaching Gender in Literature" (Rebecca Añonuevo); "Reading Class Struggles in Filipino Texts" (Gary Devilles); and "Reading Postcoloniality as Neocolonial Critique" (Oscar Campomanes),

Participants are expected to share innovative teaching strategies and creative classroom approaches toward an informed and effective literary praxis.

Non-UST teachers must pre-register. They may call Nenet Galang-Pereña 0917-8166548.



EVERY month in Esquire magazine the captains of the entertainment industry, the pop culture icons, the leaders and the loudmouths reveal their philosophy of life in the What I've Learned column. Now, you can read 10 years' worth of their often-humorous, always thoughtful advice and stunning portrait photography in the sharply designed "Meaning of Life" compilation. Some of the famed contributors include Muhammad Ali, Bill O'Reilly, Faye Dunaway, Hugh Hefner and Elvis Costello.

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6. You can win only once during the promo period. If your name is picked twice, you win the bigger prize.
7. Non-winning entries in the Preliminary Draw are still qualified for the Grand Draw.
8. Deadline of entries for the April 17 Preliminary Draw is on April 3, 2005. Deadline of entries for the July 15 Grand Draw is on June 15, 2005.
9. Winners will have their names published in a national newspaper and will be sent a letter of notification on how to claim their prizes.
10. Prizes not claimed 60 days after receipt of letter of notification will be forfeited in favor of Nestlé Philippines, Inc. upon approval of the DOH-BFAD.
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Prizes for the April 17, 2005 Preliminary Draw			
4th Prize	P 5,000	50 winners	12 Luzon, 12 Visayas, 12 Mindanao, 14 GMA
3rd Prize	P 25,000	7 winners	2 Luzon, 2 Visayas, 2 Mindanao, 1 GMA
2nd Prize	P 50,000	4 winners	1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao, 1 GMA
1st Prize	P100,000	2 winners	1 Luzon/GMA, 1 Visayas/Mindanao

TOTAL = P 825,000

Prizes for the July 15, 2005 Grand Draw			
5th Prize	P 5,000	50 winners	12 Luzon, 12 Visayas, 12 Mindanao, 14 GMA
4th Prize	P 25,000	8 winners	2 Luzon, 2 Visayas, 2 Mindanao, 2 GMA
3rd Prize	P 50,000	4 winners	1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao, 1 GMA
2nd Prize	P 100,000	2 winners	1 Luzon/GMA, 1 Visayas/Mindanao
Grand Prize	P1,000,000	1 winner	Any area

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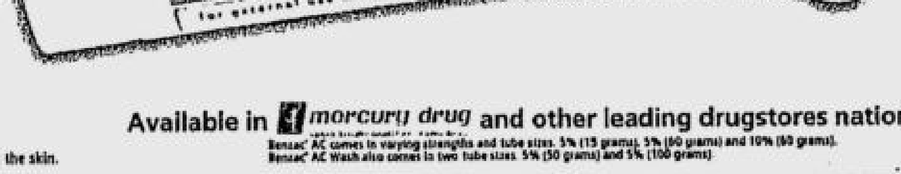

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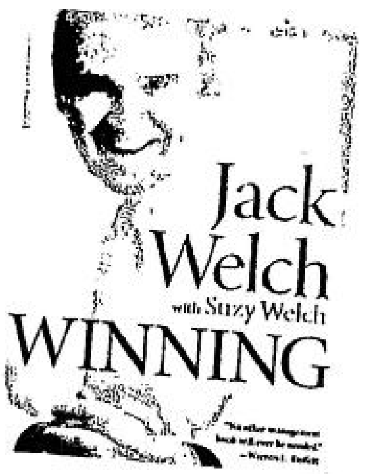
Warriors, leaders and cartoon friends

BLOODY wars are sources of bitter lessons and epic stories. Bloody warriors often pass into the realms of legend. The stories of both are now available at National Book Store.

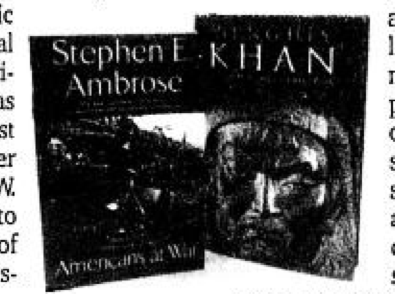
"Americans at War" is written by Stephen E. Ambrose, one of the foremost historians of the European theater of World War II, and writer of the book "Band of Brothers," among others. He shares his vast knowledge of conflict as well as the Civil War, Korea, Vietnam and the Cold War in this compelling narrative about the American way of waging war.



"Genghis Khan: Life, Death and Resurrection" is about one of history's immortals—a scourge, hero, military genius and demigod. John Man reveals in this book Khan's enduring influence in China and Mongolia. His narrative paints a vivid picture of the famed warlord, the places where he lived and fought, and the passions that still surround his name.

Political and historical reads also fill the racks of National Book Store this summer.

In "Tony Blair: The Making of a World Leader," journalist Philip Stephens offers a full portrait of this charismatic and influential European politician who has been the most solid supporter of George W. Bush's efforts to end the reign of Saddam Hussein.



"Riding with Reagan: From the White House to the Ranch" is John Barletta's one-of-a-kind memoir of working with the American actor-president, painting a picture of a relaxed Reagan at his very best. Poignant and candid, this book is an intimate portrait of the man who remains one of the most popular presidents in America's history.

From the Middle Kingdom comes "The Man Who Changed China: The Life and Legacy of Jiang Zemin," an unusually intimate and comprehensive personal and political biography by author Robert Laurence Kuhn. Kuhn demonstrates how Jiang Zemin's life personifies the history of contemporary China, and gives insights into what China is today and what it will become in the future.

Every month in Esquire magazine the captains of the entertainment industry, the pop culture icons, the leaders, and the loudmouths reveal their philosophy of life in the What I've Learned column.

Now, you can read 10 years' worth of their often-humorous, always thoughtful advice and stunning portrait photography in the sharply designed "Meaning of Life" compilation. Some of the famed contributors include Muhammad Ali, Bill O'Reilly, Faye Dunaway, Hugh Hefner and Elvis Costello.

Jack Welch's "Winning" is a great handbook that everyone from fresh college graduates to high-level managers can use to learn about business methods, especially on developing people and setting business strategy. Written in a conversational, clear and concise style, the book is divided sensibly into topics that are easy to understand and implement, no matter what your field.

Co-written by his wife Suzy Welch, packed with personal anecdotes and written in Jack's distinctive straightforward tone, "Winning" is both a great read and a great business book. It offers deep insights, original thinking, and simple advice that are bound to change the way people think about work.

The Man Who Changed China
TONY BLAIR
REAGAN

Play, laugh and learn with the fun friends from Nickelodeon: Dora, SpongeBob and Blue.

Fresh from the TV screen and on to the pages of her own book, Dora the Explorer teaches children basic Spanish words and phrases along with math and music skills. Dora and her best friend Boots also show how to observe situations and solve problems in her "Over, Under, Up and Down! Decoder Workbook."

Kids can follow the cuddly dog Blue and his clues through the pages of this book and learn how to identify basic shapes, lengths and sizes. It's brain-teasing edutainment in Blue's "Sizes and Shapes Decoder Workbook."

Meanwhile, deep down in the Pacific Ocean in the city of Bikini Bottom lives a square yellow sea sponge named SpongeBob SquarePants. Join SpongeBob in "Hands Off!" and read his wacky and fascinating stories to the children you love.

The name's Grisham, John Grisham

From page D1

if he is to survive this predicament. Sounds like it holds possibilities, doesn't it?

"The Broker," however, is filled mostly with scenes of Backman learning Italian (really) and eating a lot of good Italian dishes (seriously).

Yes, "The Broker" is a spy novel filled, page after page, with foreign language lessons, cuisine and tourism.

It's almost hypnotic, how Grisham chronicles the mind-numbingly everyday part of this spy game and while one would argue that it is perhaps one realistic way of portraying espionage, the fact that, with precious few chapters left, Grisham suddenly throws it all into the sink and begins a rather unbelievable, frenzied race around the world with hair color, encrypted telephony and the revelation of the secrets he's been holding all this time, works seriously against it.

It brings to mind what Neal Backman, Joel's son, thought at one point of his father's risky travails: "Neal glanced around his backyard, expecting to see agents dressed in black moving in on him. Where did his father pick up the cloak-and-dagger stuff? Six years in solitude maybe? A thousand spy novels?" The same could be said about Grisham and "The Broker."

Grisham displays a pared-down, efficient narrative and his eye interesting little tidbits continues to get better.

As a protagonist, Backman shares a lot with previous Grisham attorneys-on-the-run such as a checkered past, almost superhuman survival abilities and the penchant for turning even the biggest tables on his opponents.

But the otherwise preposterous circumstances and coincidences that lead up to "The Broker's" hurried resolution work against the novel.

There are certainly snippets to enjoy as well as the chance to see Grisham trying something new yet again in "The Broker." His batting average remains high despite the lack of substantial attractions in his latest novel.

After all, Grisham will no doubt continue to tinker with lawyers as the centerpieces of his future novels.

While "The Broker" gets its promising cover blown, John Grisham will no doubt be placing another lawyer in highly dangerous places, much to his loyal readers' delight, soon enough.

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WILL 'Ebolusyon' win Urian? /E2

THE RAMAYANA RETOLD. Reinventing the Rama-Ravana conflict using traditional leather puppets, classical Cambodian dancing and Mindanao's *pangalay* are the performers from IPAG and Sovanna Phum.

Asian theater rising

By Steven Patrick C. Fernandez
Contributor

AN INTEGRATED theater production built from traditional Asian art forms premiered in Taipei recently. Collaborating in producing this new work were the Philippines' Integrated Performing Arts Guild (IPAG) and artists from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and Cambodia. The project, which took a year to organize, was the brainchild of Asia Meets Asia (AMA), an artistic initiative based in Tokyo that facilitates the interaction of Asian artists and their works.

AMA, having hosted four international collaborative projects since 1997, opens doors for artists to experience the practice of another. Working with AMA allowed us to explore creative possibilities beyond our paradigms. Its theater practice eliminates a script, a notated score, fixed choreography and repetitive rehearsals. The production-in-progress would have no fixed format and would have the artist's mind leading the body to create.

AMA dramaturge Kingsy Lok visited us in Mindanao in July. We agreed on these themes: fire and water, and the destruction of civilization. Common threads wove through our ideas: the emerging homogeneity of culture because of globalization, the marginalization of indigenous peoples and the destruction of indigenous cultures.

Our creation was to be built around actual instances. We zeroed in on the Pol Pot genocide of Cambodia, Mindanao's refugee problems and the marginalization of our indigenous peoples, and the dissipation of Taiwan's aboriginal peoples.

Mounting a method

I formed a team with Melvin Pascubillo, Leilani Monterola and Wenna Balaido. The fifth member was Stanley Perry Fernandez, our marketing director, who accompanied us on his own expense to view the work for future exposures to larger audiences.

In Taipei we were joined by the Sovanna Phum Association of Phnom Penh, Cambodia's biggest private theater group led by master puppeteer Mann Kosal, classical dancer Chumvan Sodhachivy and circus theater student Sam Pysak.

I sensed that creating a new full-length work was going to be difficult in six days. We

ASIAN/ E2

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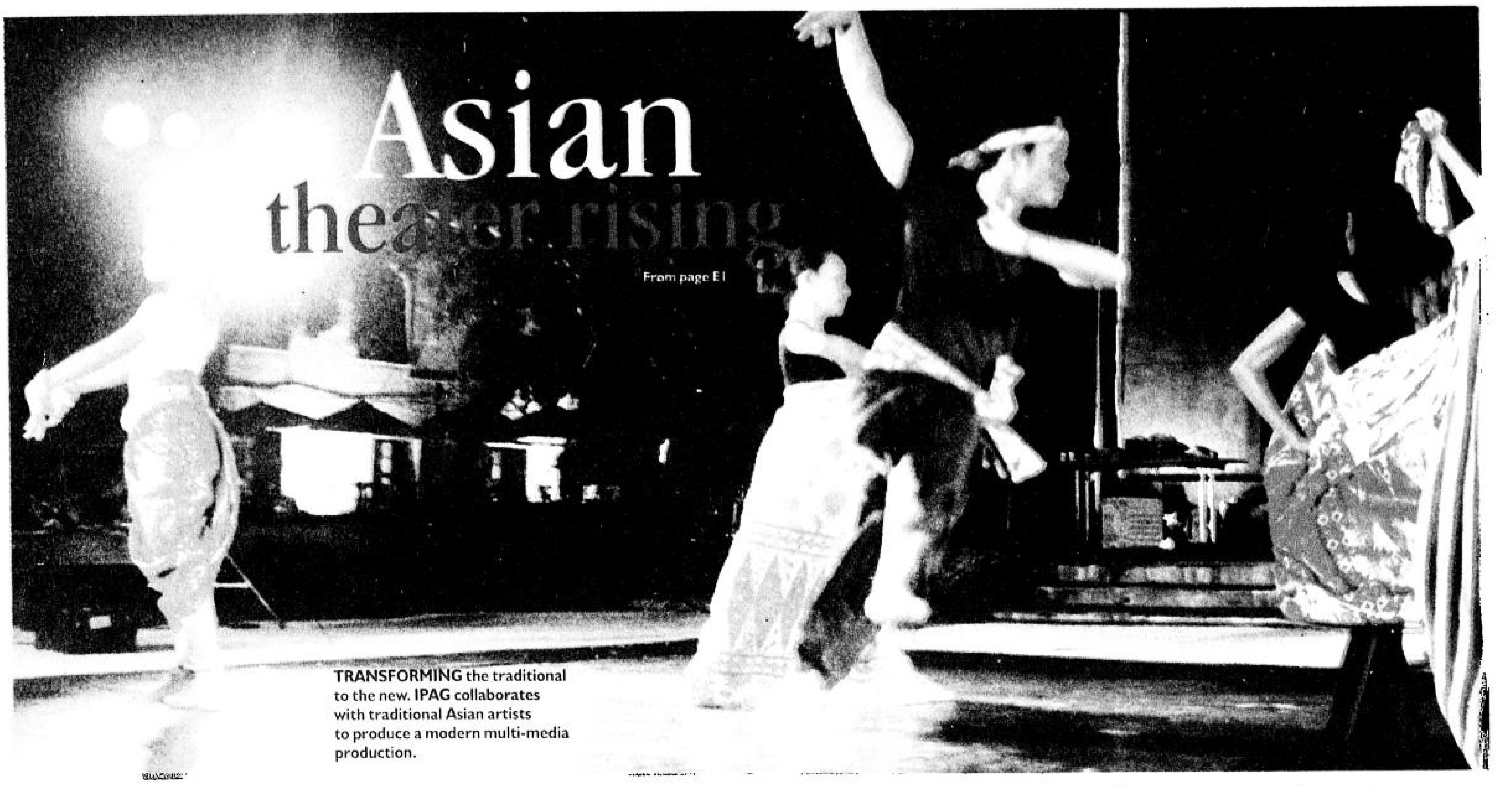
Asian theater rising

From page E1



TRANSFORMING the traditional to the new. IPAG collaborates with traditional Asian artists to produce a modern multi-media production.

had no production itinerary, no schedule, no script and no play. We discussed among peers who spoke little or no English at all.

Enigmatic

The title of our production was enigmatic: "Reviving Subalternity." Subalternity is a neologism coined from post-colonial politics that means the destruction of the "minority." This gave us an idea of the work at hand and the manner by which work would be conducted.

Kosal who experienced first-hand the Pol Pot genocide suggested the idea of a killer who returns and confesses to his crime. We expanded the killer's image to the various depreciations of culture, to globalization, and to the homogenizing of theater and culture.

We spent the next four days exploring various idioms of expressions. We introduced the *pangalay*, and the Cambodians introduced their *rorbam boran*, royal classical dancing. Alex Cheong, a Hong Kong artist, introduced to us the basics of kung fu in the Shaolin style. Not surprisingly, our dances shared the same techniques and principles of execution.

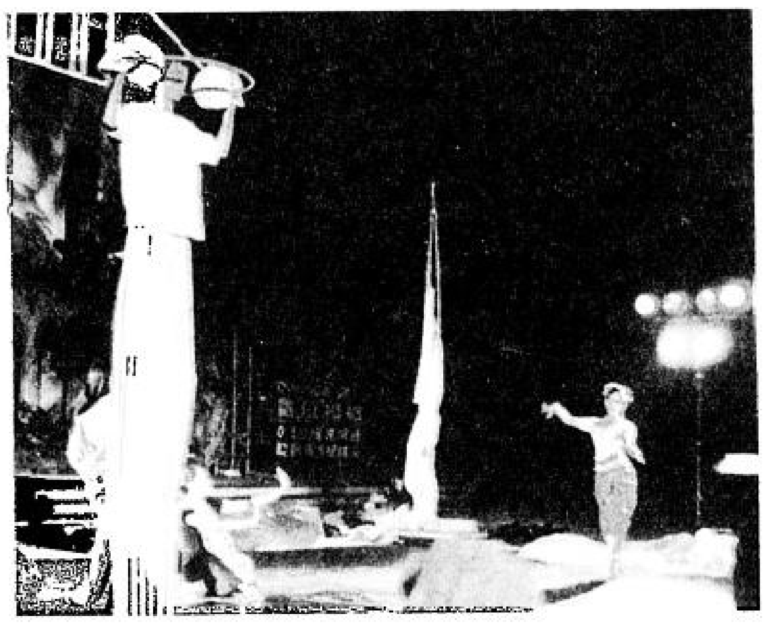
I facilitated the drawing out of images and meanings through improvisations with exercises I innovated for this mix. We developed forms, and incorporated sounds and chants. We explored vignettes with beginnings and ends. We explored with sub-texts and conflict and kept the results for future reference. We improvised with the hoola hoop, a toy I found in one corner of the theater, which would later transform into a significant central metaphor in the production.

The play took shape slowly. The plodding process made us anxious as the media and the artistic community were keenly awaiting the results. Our work was a recipe-in-process, but in reverse. While we already had the prepared ingredients (our inherent crafts), we still had to decide what to cook.

At this point, I had drawn a shape in my mind. But while I did not wish to counter the essence of improvisation, I had to encode a written guide. Being a playwright, I do not only value text as a play's primary source but I also require some written code to guide me through my creation. The scenario helped me build block by block the emerging creation. I added or subtracted portions, or cut and pasted segments to establish some logic in the composition.

Improvisation

The dancers improvised vignettes that were framed by time limits rather than by measures or beats. We paced the movements well to highlight climactic portions. We mixed silences and noises. We choreographed certain portions but were careful not to execute uniform movements to keep the improvisatory quality in the process. We kept away from the linear narrative.



"REVIVING Subalternity," a new integrated arts production produced by a collaboration of Philippine, Khmer, Taiwanese, Japanese and Hong Kong artists

The Ramayana back grounded the composition. The Rama story involves a lot of violence—in war, in deceit, in power plays, and even in its romance and was visualized by the puppets, chanted in the Khmer classical manner and merged with classical dance.

To underscore the visual-aural complements, I merged contrasting colors creating a harsh mix of amber and lavender. A single key light projected from behind the white screen brought out the designs of the life-size leather puppets and produced the eerie feel.

We reversed the process to musically score the composition: rather than have the dances created from composed music, music was created during the performance-in-progress prodded by the "feel" of the executed movements. We integrated traditional Asian instruments with the synthesized sounds of shrieks, screeches, and whatever electronic noise our equipment (an air synthesizer and a mini keyboard) would produce.

Performance venue was the Hua Shan Art District, an open space with the ruins of a wine factory destroyed by Japanese war bombs. The audience sat on stone sculptures or stood on a sprawling lawn around the bean-shaped performance area.

Opening with a Khmer chant, the prologue highlights Sam who enters tall on stilts. He is wrapped by a loop that holds two skulls. While Chumvan dances around Sam, the balloon slowly inflates. Clever use of the *malong* and gestures of the *pangalay* and *langka silat* (Philippine martial arts) evoke images of anguish, hopelessness and imprisonment. Sovanna Phum suggests war using the personages of Lakshmi who clash with Ravana, two flat puppets held high that flap at each other.

Using the hoola hoops, the performers "hook" a few members of the audience who improvise with the artists. They then become parts of the sets. With the balloons inflated, Melvin ropes in all persons with a long red cloth. The rope becomes a large cloth and forms into a large bubble as it spreads over the space. Then firecrackers explode, and the space bursts into pandemonium.

Silence. The space is flooded in red and broken by the creases of the cloth and the immobile bodies. The one-note tone of a bamboo flute cuts the silence. Sam in stilts crosses the stage, but he is now handicapped supported by a high crutch. The dummy hangs by a rope around its neck.

New aesthetics

There have been few attempts to explore new forms, new meanings and new manners. Bland is the manner of traditional forms plucked out of their original states and simply transferred to new space and time.

But when traditional forms are used in another context, as in the Hua Shan performance, their original functions are transformed. They no longer signify their original meanings but transform into new idioms. The Khmer *rorbam boran* no longer suits the tastes of Cambodian royalty but narrates the new segments of the Ramayana. The *pangalay* is no longer the Tausug dance performed for Jolo's social gatherings but becomes a medium for new expressions.

We borrow, recreate and build from traditions to explore how best we may reinvent these to sketch out new meanings in our "new" performances.

"Reviving Subalternity" repeats in Tokyo in October. It will be different because the impulses that drove our artists to recreate sense in the Hua Shan performance cannot be duplicated. The expressions shall be shaped by an entirely different set of motivations in different conditions.

Even with the facility for the artists to produce the *pangalay*, Cambodian Puppet Theater, the *rorban boram* and Shaolin kung fu, these expressions are insipid without the prodding of the mind and the passion of the heart.

Music-making the Suzuki way

By Pablo A. Tariman

Many things about the Suzuki method of teaching music were all déjà vu to me.

Carmencita Arambulo, president of the Philippine Suzuki Association, said the method starts with exposure and immersion, the ears before the eyes and developing good character before note-reading.

I recall the late Dr. Jesus Licad playing Bach and Beethoven the whole day while Rosario Licad was pregnant with Cecile Licad.

Actually, all my deep knowledge of Brahms, Chopin and Ravel came from observing Licad rehearse and perform—solo and with orchestra—since I first saw her at age 14 in 1975.

Listening to DZFE in 1967 introduced me to fine music. Piano lessons with one Ms. Asuncion along Mendoza St. in Quiapo bored me because of the keyboard exercises, but learning how to sing with Prof. Zulueta (near Malacañang) made me realize that music is serious business and not something for hobbyists.

I quit and turned to Kerima Polotan and Nick Joaquin for literary education.

THE LIWANAG children learn music through the Suzuki method, Felix, 5; Claire, 7; Franco, 13; Claudia, 6; and Francis Carlos, 16.

But then 30 years of watching and listening to Licad convinced me that music can be absorbed without going to music schools unless you plan to teach.

Did that make me the first Suzuki guinea pig, er, pupil in the late '60s with DZFE and Cecile Licad as my first "Suzuki" teacher?

But to go back to the scientific Suzuki method (mine was pure music exploration), Prof. Arambulo and her violin teacher-son Ariel call it the "mother tongue approach"—daily listening by imitation and constant repetition, with parents acting as "co-teachers."

The method was a big success in Japan, and it caught like wildfire in the United States. Arambulo says 90 percent of students admitted at the Juilliard School in New York started on the Suzuki method and the following in Manila has spread to the provinces.

Last week at St. Paul University's Fleur de Lis Auditorium, a Philippine-Korean Suzuki friendship concert took place with Suzuki piano, violin and cello students participating.

The INQUIRER singled out a typical Suzuki parent in the person of Mike and Christine Liwanag who have five children taking Suzuki music lessons namely: 16-year-old cello student Francis Carlos, 13-year-old piano student Franco, seven-year-old violin student Claire, six-year-old piano student Claudia and five-year-old violin pupil Felix.

Ms. Liwanag agreed the Suzuki method worked very well with budding young musicians.

"I agree with the Suzuki learning method of learning music by daily exposure to music, constant repetition of pieces, and encouragement and support from parents," she said.

"These steps actually do not only apply to music but also in academics and sports. I am pleased to say that my children excel in school and their chosen hobbies as a result of discipline and nurturing. In that sense, I am a co-advocate of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's philosophy that 'Where love is deep, much can be accomplished.'"

How does it feel to be parents of young musicians?

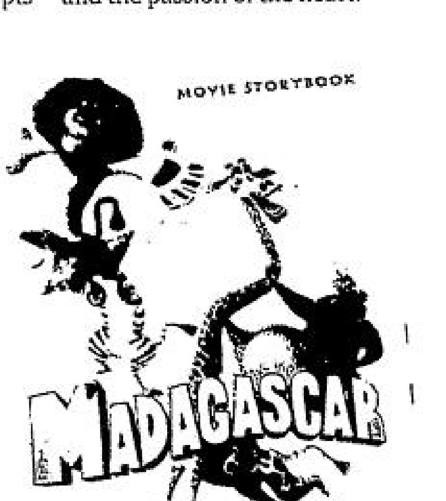
"I enjoy the music I hear every day at home," Liwanag said. "My visitors at home say they feel like they are in a hotel or restaurant whenever we serve dinner with my kids playing in the background. I am glad my children play at will. When my friends telephone me at home, they ask me what CD is being played. I tell them 'Oh, that's not a CD. It's Franco playing the Haydn sonata.' Music, like prayer, actually bonds my family together."

Here and there

NAMCYA winner Oliver Salonga arrives tomorrow (May 17) from Florida for his Baguio solo debut on May 28 at the Baguio Country Club Ballroom in Baguio City.

Another NAMCYA winner, cellist Victor Michael Coo, arrives May 28 for his engagement with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra on June 12 at the Philamlife Theater.

Both Salonga and Coo are soloists of the MPO in the gala Independence Day Concert featuring the Liszt Piano Concerto No. 2 and Dvorak's Cello Concerto. For inquiries on the Baguio and Manila concerts, please call cell 09187376901 or tel. 9017156.



`Madagascar' movie storybook

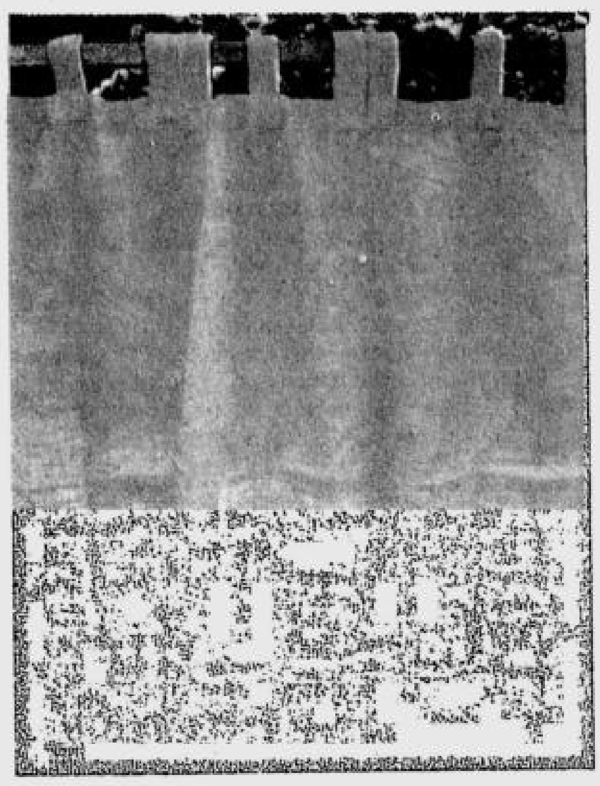
Catch "Madagascar" before it hits the big screen at selected National Book Store branches!

"Madagascar" is the story of four New York zoo animals—a lion who loves being the center of attention, a zebra who wants to live in the wild, a giraffe who's a hypochondriac and a hippo who's got attitude to spare—and their adventures on the island of Madagascar.

Their adventure begins when they are taken from the safety of their city homes, loaded on to a boat headed for Africa to be returned to the wild. But disaster strikes, and they find themselves shipwrecked in Madagascar.

Can the New York City Zoosters survive in the wild without losing their heads? Is the wild life the right life for them? This gorgeously illustrated retelling of the entire movie is sure to become a family favorite.

Ethnic heritage instruments and crafts



THICK jute curtain at Living Culture comes in red or natural brown.

OFTEN have Manileños wondered where to go for ethnic wear and jewelry, as gifts or for themselves to wear. No longer will they have to search, as Living Culture has it all, with home-grown products created from Filipino imagination and rooted in tradition.

The store promotes the native tribes' cultures with their displays of the Manobo headdresses, hemp backpacks, necklaces, belts and T'Boli ornaments. Home products include placemats using Bicol and Mandaya weaves, table runners with T'Boli weaves, Ilocano grass mats, jute, cheesecloth and raffia curtains, bamboo slit mats, grass (*talahib*) blinds, rice god carvings (*bolol*) and clay mobiles—all are feasts for the eyes.

Also offered are locally woven clothing such as the Visayan pineapple fabric (piña) and Ifugao shawls, hand-painted shirts with Philippine syllabary (*alibata*), traditional T'Boli blouses and kimonos and polos with traditional Manobo, Mangyan and T'Boli embroidery. Customers also may purchase Asian pants, Asian skirts and tubular cloths (*malong*) at the store.

There are tribal musical instruments such as the bamboo flutes, bamboo buzzers (*bongkaka, toganggang*), baby *gamelans* (*saronay*), wooden *gamelans* (*kulintang a kayo*), two-string lute (*kudyapi*), hand-carved guitar, bell chimes, rainmakers and shakers.

Nono

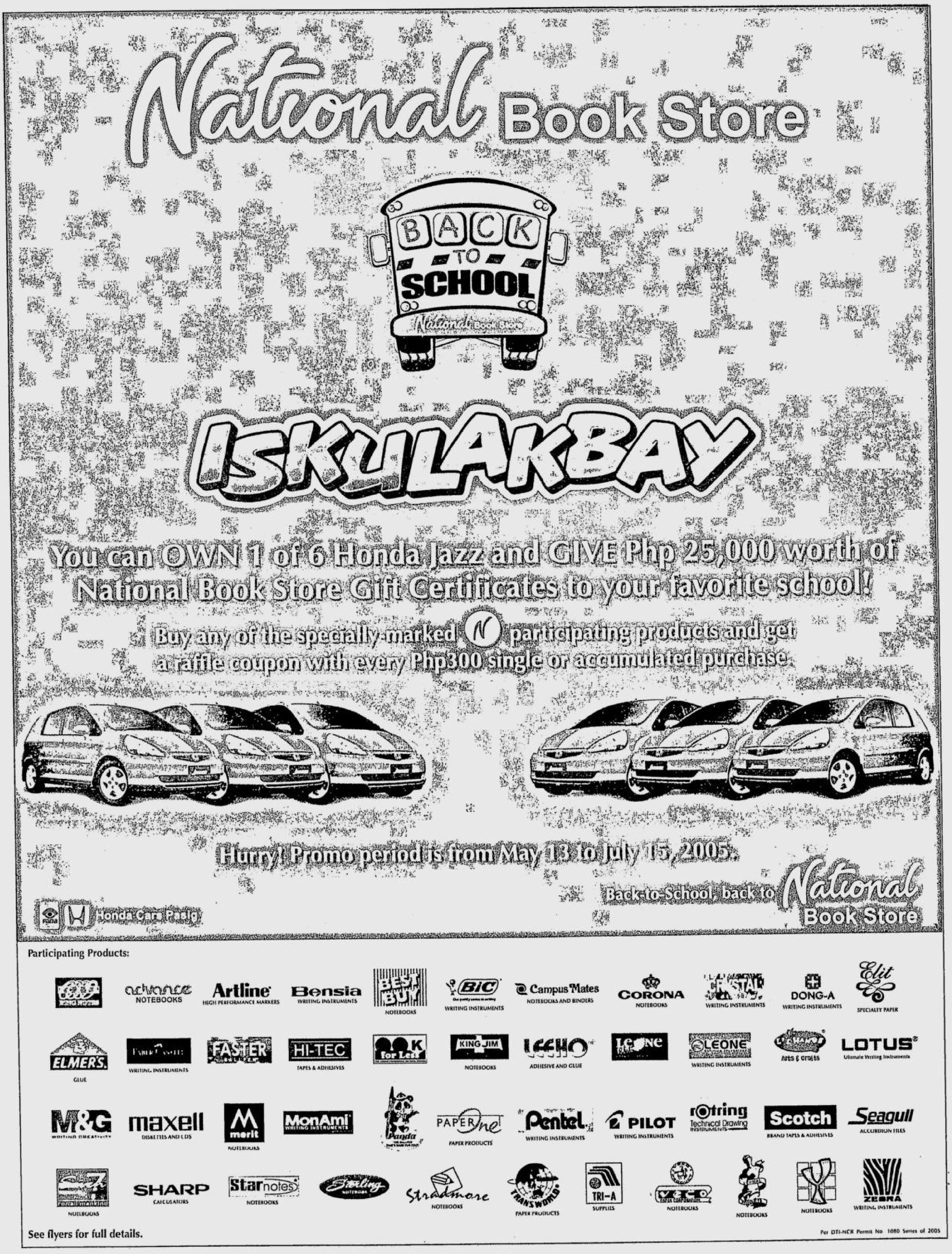
Grace Nono, ethnic singer and oralist, travels all over the islands recording and documenting tribal songs and oralist epic chants, and gathering indigenous peoples' products.

Her recordings of Philippine traditional and world music on CDs featuring her and guitarist Bob Aves are sold at Living Culture.

THIN white cheesecloth curtains

Other artists available on CDs are Pinikpikan, Joey Ayala, Bayang Barrios, Kalinga musician Arnel Banasan, Maguindanao *kulintang* master-teacher Aga Mayo Butocan, Maranaw epic-chanter princess Sindao Banisil, Hanunuo Mangyan chanters-poets Ulyaw Bat-ang, Biro Pok-oy and others, T'Boli shaman-epic chanter Mendung Sabal, Mabobo and Higaonon.

The Living Culture is at the Lifestyle Area of the Greenbelt Shopping Plaza, Makati City.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1080 Series of 2005

Bayanihan auditions

THE BAYANIHAN announces the start of its search for new faces for 2005. They are targeting females who are 23 years of age at the maximum upon recruitment and at least 5'4" in height, and males who are 25 years of age at the maximum upon recruitment and at least 5'8" in height.

Suzie Moya Benitez, Bayanihan executive director, said the search is made more significant because of Bayanihan's scheduled coast to coast tour of the United States in 2006.

"This will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for young and dedicated dance enthusiasts to experience," said Benitez. "Ideally, we want three groups, or even more, of Bayanihan performers who can perform all at the same time—abroad, in the provinces and here in Manila."

Next month, the Bayanihan will be having simultaneous performances in Japan, Vietnam, Brunei, China and Taiwan.

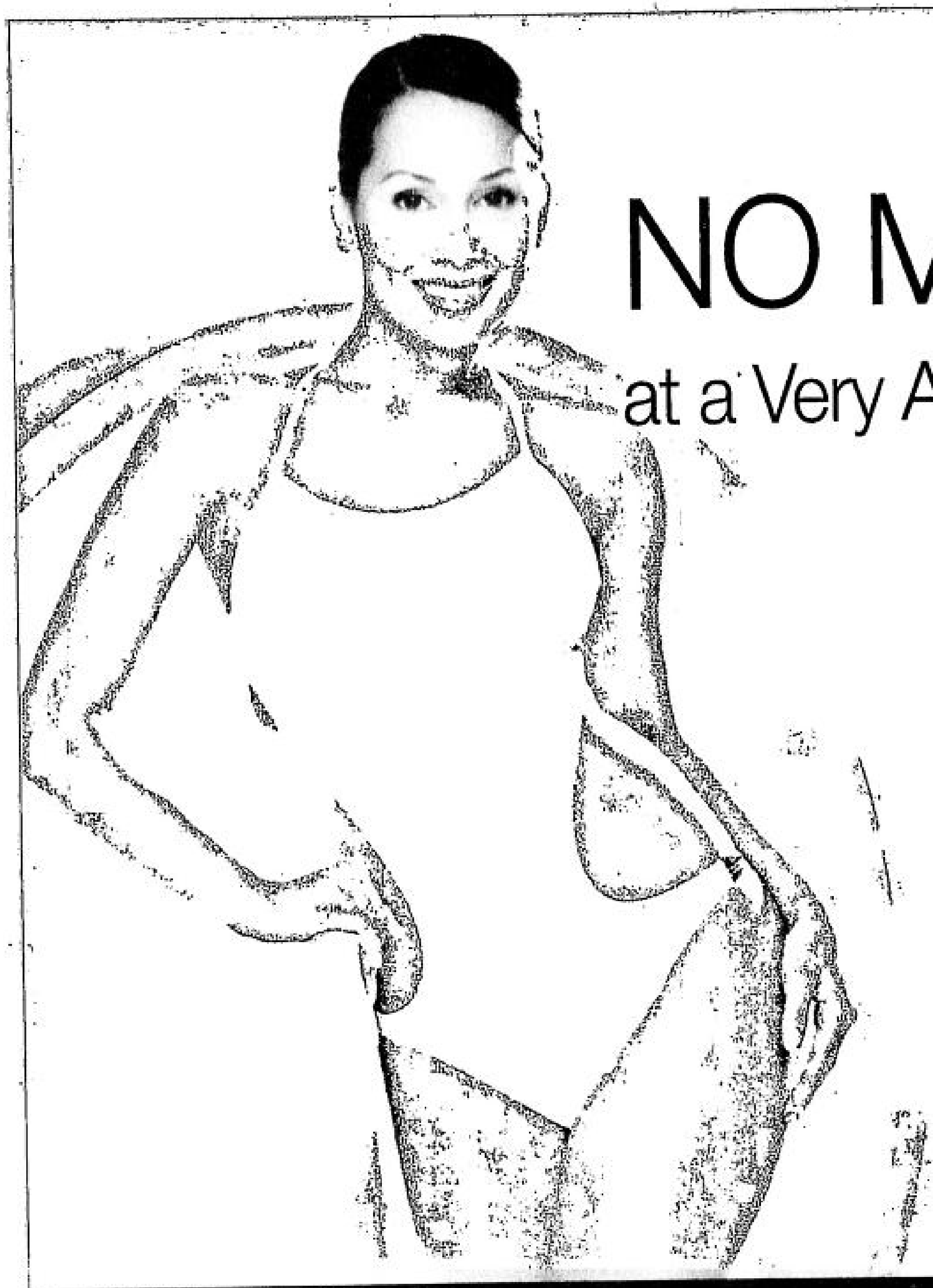
Since its inception in 1957, the company which was founded by Helen Z. Benitez, chair of the Philippine Women's University, has mounted 14 major world tours and more than 100 short tours.

Adjudged top among 13 countries during its debut at the Brussels World Fair on May 22,1958, the Bayanihan has earned many "firsts"—the first Filipino group to perform at the Winter Garden Theater in Broadway and the first non-American dance company to perform at the New York Theater of the Lincoln: Center for the Performing Arts.

The Bayanihan was also the first cultural group to perform in Russia and the People's Republic of China; the first to make an in-depth tour of South America; the first Filipino dance company to perform at the World Showcase. Millennium Village Epcot, Disneyworld, Florida and the only Filipino dance company to receive the Ramon Magsaysay award for international understanding.

In appreciation and recognition of their pioneering efforts and international success, the people of the Philippines through the 10th Congress enacted Republic Act 8626 declaring the Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company as the Philippines' National Folk Dance Company.

All applicants are required to bring two 2 x 2 photos and a certification from their school or employer. Call 5251685 or 5368602.



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DUNKIN DONUTS
Slabsters

Bright shining 'Island'

Actors' Actors Inc.'s sensational new production of 'Once on This Island' at the RCBC Theater gives birth to a new star in Raki Vega

By Gibbs Cadiz

BECAUSE the local music industry has, in the last few years, effectively ceded its mission of discovering new musical talents to the explosion of "American Idol"-style singing contests that now litter primetime TV, singing prowess in these parts has become associated with a certain musical homogeneity, a style template to a song that sounds as pre-fabricated as it is exhausting to the senses.

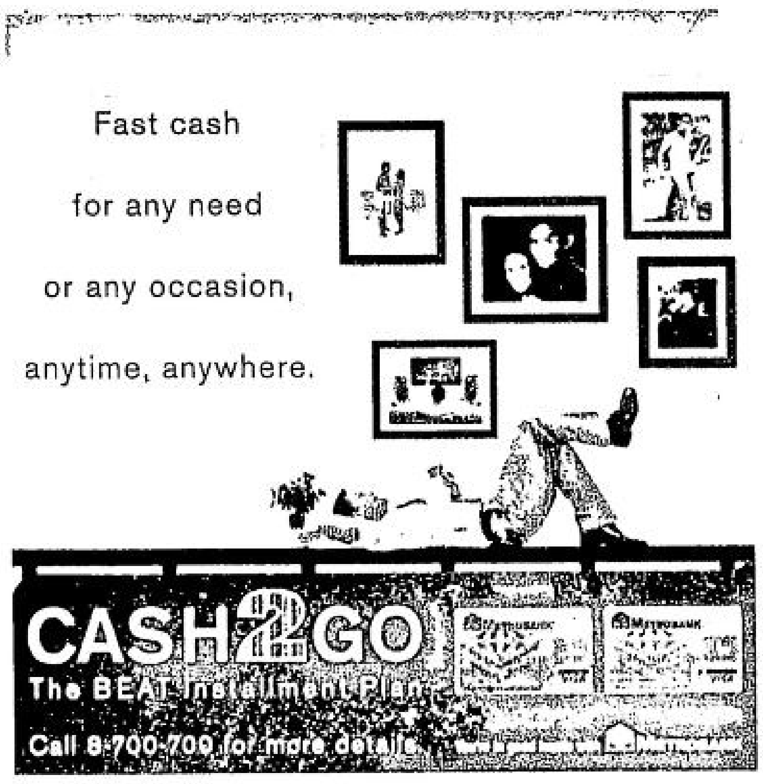
Yes, Filipinos generally love *birit* and equate it with good singing, and shows like "Star for a Night," "Star in a Million," "Pinoy Pop Superstar" and "Born Diva" are not about to dissuade them from that notion.

In these high-strung gladiatorial arenas, stratospheric notes, endless curlicues and demanding melismas substitute for honest, emotive vocalizing. Gone are the days when contestants could win with an elegant take on a Kuh Ledesma classic. Now everyone wants a Regine Velasquez glass-breaker, and damn those fragile eardrums.

Wondrous discovery

There is, thus, enormous thrill and excitement, akin to a wondrous discovery, in seeing a certified "Born Diva" like young Raki Vega (she won the title last year) molt out of her Mariah-possessed skin and stretch her abilities into musical theater, like what she's doing in Actors' Actors Inc.'s sen-

BRIGHT/ F2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Nakakailang AHHCHOO ka ba araw-araw, uma-umaga?

GINO Gonzales' colorful costumes and evocative production design help bring "Once On This Island" to sparkling life.

Bright shining 'Island'

From page F1

sational new production of "Once on This Island," which opened last Friday at the RCBC Theater.

In her first lead role in a major theatrical production, Vega delivers a stunningly persuasive, star-making performance brimming with fire and heartbreak. She sings her songs with exacting grace and power, and dances Denisa Reyes' rhythmically expansive choreography with such abandon that one is left fearing for her delicate frame.

And these she does in the company of some of the biggest marquee names in Philippine theater: Bituin Escalante, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Jett Pangan, Michael de Mesa, Michael Williams, May Bayot, Bodjie Pascua.

"Once on This Island" is a veritable galaxy of theatrical talent, and all that brightness—not to mention Vega's breakthrough turn—translates to the most compelling reason to head to the theater this month.

Carribean setting

Based on the children's book "My Love, My Love," by Trinidadian author Rosa Guy, "Once on This Island," with music by Stephen Flaherty and libretto by Lynn Ahrens, transplants "The Little Mermaid" to the humid, volatile French-colonized Carribean with its tale of a peasant girl, Ti Moune, who chooses to die of unrequited love for her beloved, a spineless *grand homme* named Daniel.

But while that love was never meant to be in the great social divide of the island, its mythic retelling by the islanders becomes an act of nurture and resiliency over generations, ensuring their survival as a community.

JETT Pangan as Papa Ge, god of death

RAKI Vega in a star-making turn as Ti Moune

When it debuted on Broadway in 1990, "Once on This Island's" enchanting Carribean-inflected score earned eight Tony nominations, including Best Score, Best Book and Best Musical. It competed for the top plum with the likes of "Miss Saigon" and "The Will Rogers Follies," which in the end was adjudged Best Musical.

Thankfully, its loss at the Tonys didn't mean the end for the musical. Its distinctly melodic, lilting score and haunting love story ensured a long life in revivals worldwide. In the Philippines, it is on its third run.

Dong Alegre first staged it at the Manila Hotel, with Jenine Desiderio as Ti Moune and Joy Viado in the show-stopping role of Asaka, goddess of the earth. Repertory Philippines followed suit with a memorable production that saw Gladys Silverio as Ti Moune (understudied by Maya Barredo) and Nonie Buencamino as Daniel.

That production, staged at the intimate confines of the now-defunct William J. Shaw Theater at the Shangri-La Plaza, married great acting with ingenious production design (a circular ascending ramp that flexibly served the show's rapid scene changes) for a darker, more earthbound but no less musically vivid version.

Spare but evocative

This time, Bart Guingona's incarnation of "Once on This Island" is notable for its sun-dappled, sorbet-colored costumes and spare but evocative production design (curtains of bamboo Venetian blinds draped around the stage and doubling as windows, entrances, even a bed canopy), both by Gino Gonzales, plus Reyes' sinuous choreography and a nearly perfect cast, all helped along by John Batalla's lighting.

JEFFREY Hidalgo, Bituin Escalante and Michael de Mesa

Near-perfect, because if there's a wayward kink in this crisply galvanizing show, it has to do, alas, with Jeffrey Hidalgo as Daniel. This veteran pop performer and sometime stage actor (he was the male lead in "Alikabok") is simply underequipped for the role, which calls for a man charismatic enough to drive a headstrong peasant girl to defy her roots and die for him.

Hidalgo isn't terrible, but neither is he appealing enough to demand our attention. He sings feebly and acts unconvincingly—an unfortunate turn, because his character happens to have one of the score's best songs, a lovely ballad called "Some Girls."

Hidalgo's diffidence is brought into higher relief with the uniformly accomplished performances of the rest of the cast, like Escalante as Asaka, who simply flattens everyone with her "Mama Will Provide" number. Lauchengco-Yulo is also terrific as Erzulie, goddess of love. Her sensuous take on Erzulie's anthem, "Part of the Human Heart," is a true highlight.

Among the men, Jett Pangan is forceful as Papa Ge, god of death, while Michael Williams makes the most of Agwe, god of water, whose vocal requirements are a notch higher than Williams' usual range, but which he nails down, nevertheless.

In the role of Ti Moune's adoptive parents, Mama Euralie and Tonton Julian, May Bayot and Bodjie Pascua are given the show's most dramatic, emotionally weighty scenes, and they acquit themselves movingly (though Pascua could use a bit more amplification in his singing). Vega's scenes with them throb with genuine feeling, helping to give the musical an authentically gripping core.

Different mindset

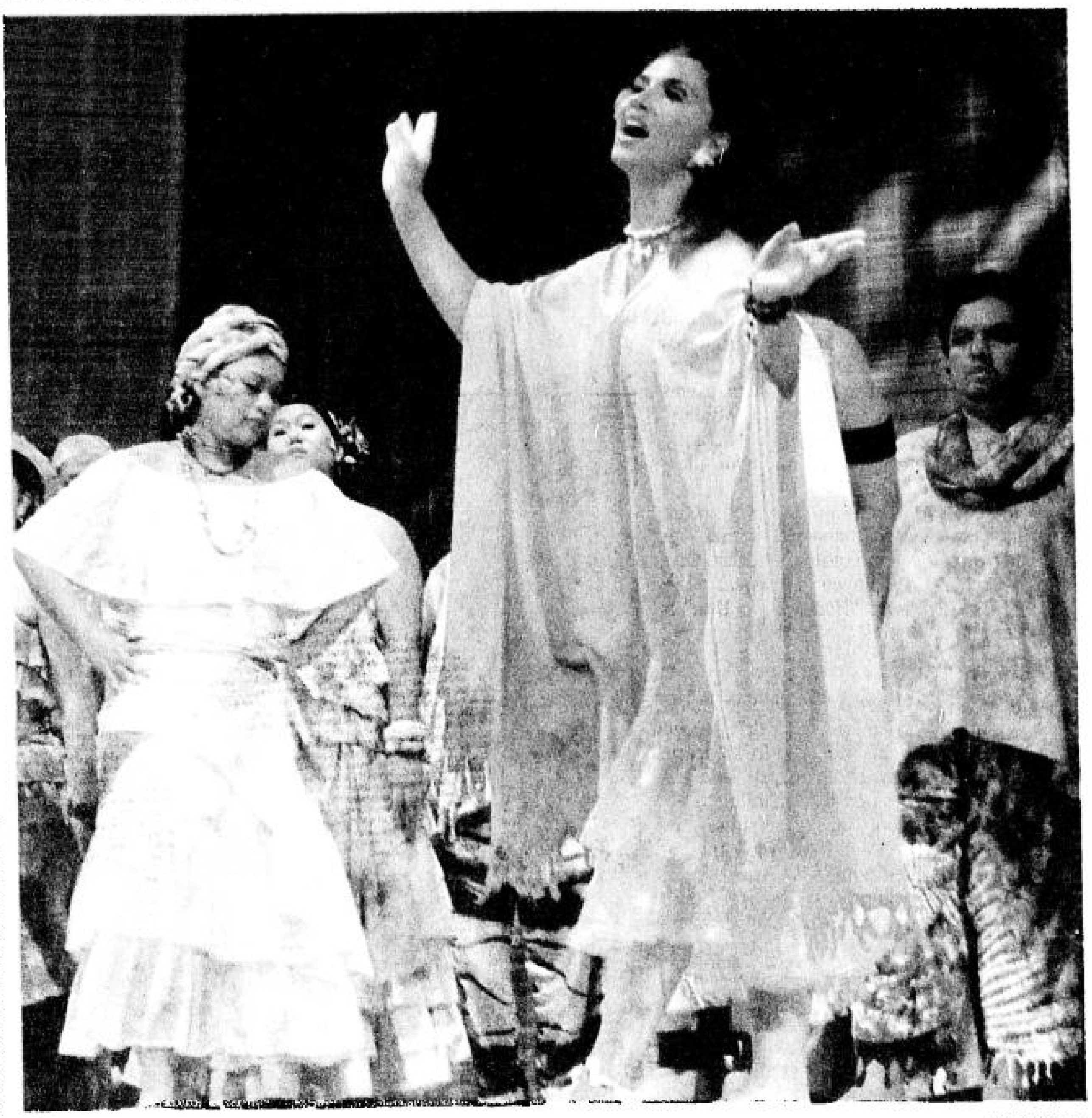
Guingona employs a more capacious mindset to his staging by focusing not only on Ti Moune's instructive tale but also on the act of storytelling itself, as a tool by which a community heals and binds itself.

That subtle shift leads to a singularly beautiful ending. The little girl (Gala Angeni Sanchez) savoring Ti Moune's tale in the beginning now assumes the role of storyteller, as the lights fade, the shadows lengthen, and the chorus croons, "Our lives become the stories that we weave..."

A great musical, a vibrant staging, a new star—the story of this "Once on This Island" is painted in triumphant, sparkling strokes. The gods themselves must be dancing.

"Once on This Island" runs until May 29 at the RCBC Theater, Makati City. Call 8919999 or 7517646-47.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph



MENCHU Lauchengco-Yulo plays Erzulie, goddess of love.

HIDALGO as Daniel

TO MARK the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II and the liberation of the Terezin concentration camp and ghetto near Prague, Czech Ambassador Stanislav Slavicky, with Israeli Ambassador Yehoshua Sagi and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, presented "Remembering Terezin," featuring the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

CZECH Ambassador Stanislav Slavicky (second from right) and Israeli Ambassador Yehoshua Sagi (second from left) with German Ambassador Axel Rain Welshaupt (left) and Jewish Museum director Milos Pojar (right)

THE CZECH ambassador with Maestro Eugene Castillo of the PPO and Noam Sivan

Death of a violin virtuoso and other war stories

From page F4

In between tending the family's vegetable garden, Romero turned to his violin and practised without letup, to the delight of the neighboring farmers who wiped their sweat to the strain of Beethoven.

But as Liberation drew near, there were sporadic encounters between guerrillas and the Japanese soldiers where the Romeros lived.

During their retreat to the dugouts, it was the violin that Romero would secure to safety.

One night, Japanese soldiers actually stormed Romero's nipa hut looking for guerrillas.

Trembling with fear, Romero vowed to the soldiers and played Japanese tunes he learned from school and radio broadcast. One of those pieces he played to appease the Japanese soliders was "Hamabe No Uta," a sentimantal piece about the sea.

Autobiography

Romero recalled that scary moment in his autobiography, "An American Affair": "Their lilting music broke the stillness of that scary night, and soon I saw the Japanese soldiers smiling, obviously tamed by a familiar tune from their motherland. They left us smiling. It was thus that my violin taught me that a Japanese could be more than the harsh-voiced, bayonet-wielding soldier whose hand was ever itching to slap the face of Filipino civilians."

On Feb. 3, 1945, Sherman tanks rumbled near Romero's nipa hut in Novaliches and they witnessed eight trucks of Japanese soldiers fighting it out with the Americans. He had never seen so many dead Japanese soldiers in his life.

But three Japanese—an officer and two enlisted men—actually found themselves hiding in their nipa hut and signaled them to keep quiet.

Romero asked that he be allowed to play the violin. He played a Japanese song he knew and the rattled soldiers relaxed. When the piece was over, the soldiers left.

It later occurred to Romero that retreating Japanese soldiers were notorious for butchering their hostages. He could not forget the night his violin actually saved him and his two sisters.

Herbet Zipper

Among the prominent musicians who survived the Japanese Occupation was Manila Symphony Orchestra conductor Herbert Zipper who was imprisoned for several weeks at Villamor Hall.

Zipper took over the Manila Symphony from its founder Alexander Lippay who passed away early in 1939.

During the Japanese Occupation, Zipper refused to lend his name and that of the Manila Symphony to the Japanese propaganda campaign for "normalcy." Instead, he gave private lessons and did intelligence work for the "anti-Japanese resistance."

On May 9, 1945, Zipper organized the first Manila Symphony post-liberation concert in the ruins of Sta. Cruz church minus its star soloist and concertmaster—Ernesto Vallejo.

Ironically, Zipper had witnessed two world wars in his lifetime.

He pursued his early conducting career in Austria (his birthplace), as well as in Germany and Russia. After Hitler's invasion of Austria, Zipper was imprisoned in the notorious Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps where he composed songs to lift up the inmates' morale.

Released through his family's efforts, Zipper joined his fiancée, Trudl Dubsky, in Manila in 1939 and introduced several generation of Filipinos to the orchestral music of Mozart, Brahms and Beethoven through his leadership in the Manila Symphony Orchestra, which died a natural death when then Cultural Center of the Philippines founded another orchestra later called the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

Zipper, who passed away on April 21, 1997 in Santa Monica, California was a subject of a documentary which was nominated for the Oscar awards on the same year.

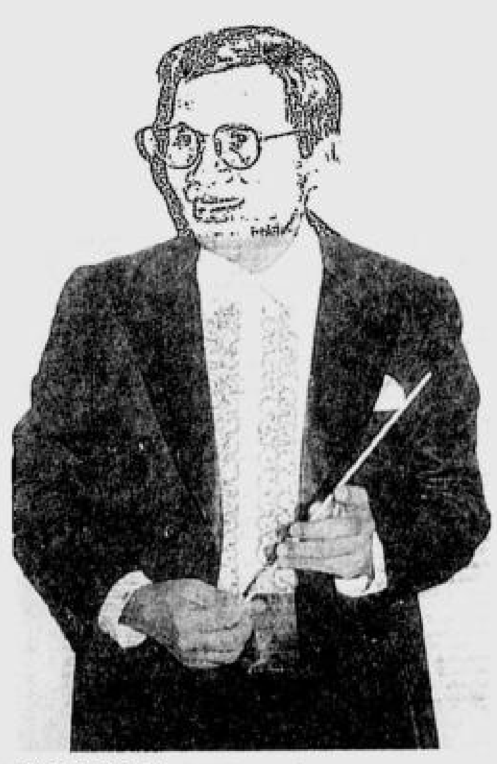
The late Conchita Sunico designated me manager of the Manila Symphony Orchestra when Zipper was trying to revive it even with the subsidized presence of the PPO.

As the short-lived orchestra manager, I helped Zipper mount his last concert in Manila with what was left of the MSO. I assisted Zipper in the audition of soloists and rehearsals of the chorus members under Dick Mazo.

The program of that last Metropolitan Theater concert of Maestro Zipper in 1989 was ominous. It was Mozart's "Requiem" and Strauss's "Metamorphoses."

It was probably one of the same pieces the MSO played during its post-liberation concert on May 9, 1945 in the ruins of Sta. Cruz Church.

Music saved Redentor Romero from the war. But not Ernesto Vallejo, the first Filipino violin prodigy



REDENTOR Romero

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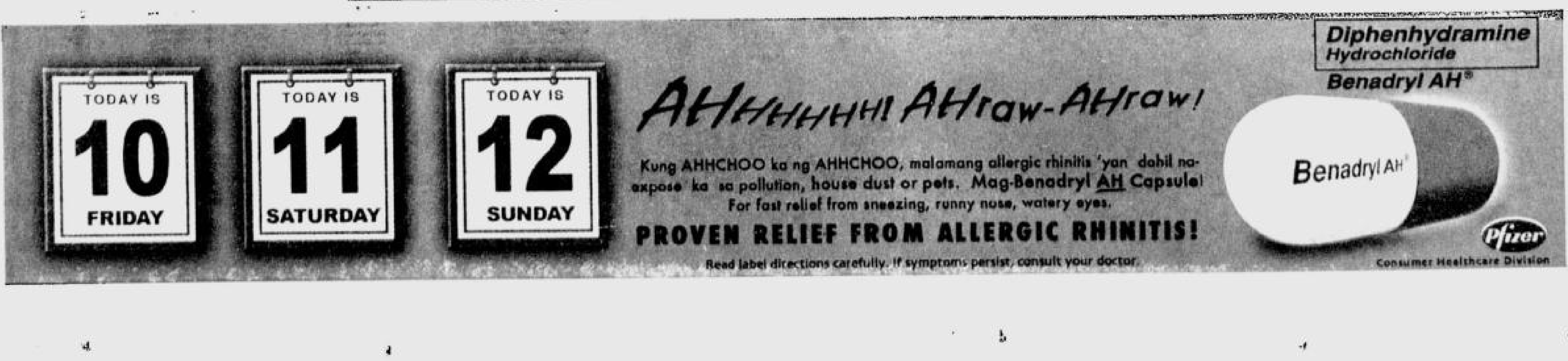

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Death of a violin virtuoso and other war stories

By Pablo A. Tariman

In the five-part series on the "Holocaust in Manila," the INQUIRER recalled the sad fate that befell Manila's prominent families, among them the Lims (Vicente), the Escodas (notably Josefa Llanes Escoda), the Quirinos, the Syquias, the Del Mundos, the Lahozes and the Colaycos, among others. But the series left out a holocaust victim who was a national treasure.

An equally shocking aftermath of the holocaust of 1945 is the death of the first Filipino violin prodigy and probably the last of the great Filipino violinists, Ernesto Vallejo.

Born in 1909, Vallejo was to the violin born as Cecile Licad was to the piano born.

If Licad impressed Van Cliburn at age 11, Vallejo at age 12 impressed no less than the great Russian violinist Mischa Ellman when the latter visited Manila in 1921.

It was Ellman himself who suggested that Vallejo be given the chance to study abroad.

The young Vallejo entered the Riverdale Country School in New York and finished his high school there.

As it was, Vallejo was not just a prodigious violinist, but a renaissance man probably in the mold of Jose Rizal.

He also studied the piano, became proficient in French, and excelled in tennis and swimming at the same time. After only three years of violin studies in the United States, he gave his first concerts in Florida, Ohio, Washington D.C., Boston and other cities in the United States.

Expensive gifts

After one such concert, an admirer gifted him with a 200-year-old Ferdinand Dondolfi violin costing $10,000 (this in the late 1920s!). Another admirer—a widow from California—gifted him with a violin worth $2,000.

HERBERT Zipper

Vallejo was the first violinist to debut with the New York's Town Hall to great acclaim. He was also the first Filipino to give a command performance for the then US President Calvin Coolidge at the White House and for no less than General Douglas MacArthur with whom Vallejo stayed for two weeks in the latter's Stotsenberg Estate in Philadelphia.

Wrote Carmita Legarda, who witnessed first hand the performances of Vallejo with the Manila Symphony Orchestra before the war: "Vallejo's great artistry and commanding presence, despite his diminutive size, always proved a drawing card whenever he was soloist and his level of musicianship helped to mold the MSO to achieve a standard of musical excellence and maturity."

Among the noted pupils of Vallejo were violinists-turned conductors Redentor Romero and Basilio Manalo.

So where was Vallejo in the last two years before the Holocaust of 1945?

As early as 1944, Vallejo found it hard to survive in Manila.

From Romero's account, living in Manila during that year was pure hell. The prices of staple food rose, looters multiplied and more and more suspected guerrillas and innocent civilians were being tortued, among them Romero's brother.

Fateful retreat

For this reason, Vallejo accepted the invitation of a wealthy family friend, Manuel Gonzalez to evacuate in Tanauan, Batangas.

His cherished possessions then were his four expensive violins and several music pieces.

There were regular concerts in the Tanauan house where Vallejo started living in 1944. Among those who came were some Japanese officers who they thought were friends.

But on the night of Feb. 9, 1945, a messenger from the guerrilla forces warned them that the Japanese command based in Batangas had received orders that all civilians left in the town would be massacred and their houses burned.

The Vallejos thought that since they had befriended some Japanese officers during those house concerts, they would be spared.

The next day. Feb. 10. 1945, the retreating Japanese marine Corps in Tanauan town killed scores of innocent civilians, among them Vallejo and his wife and three children. Their house was burned along with the music scores and the four priceless violins!

Redentor Romero

How did other musicians fare during the war?

From their once prosperous Singalong abode, the family of the then aspiring violinist Redentor Romero retreated to the crowded Sta. Cruz district in Manila.

Romero's violin lessons were interrupted and to survive, he hawked cigarettes along Rizal Avenue while his brothers worked as shoeshine boys.

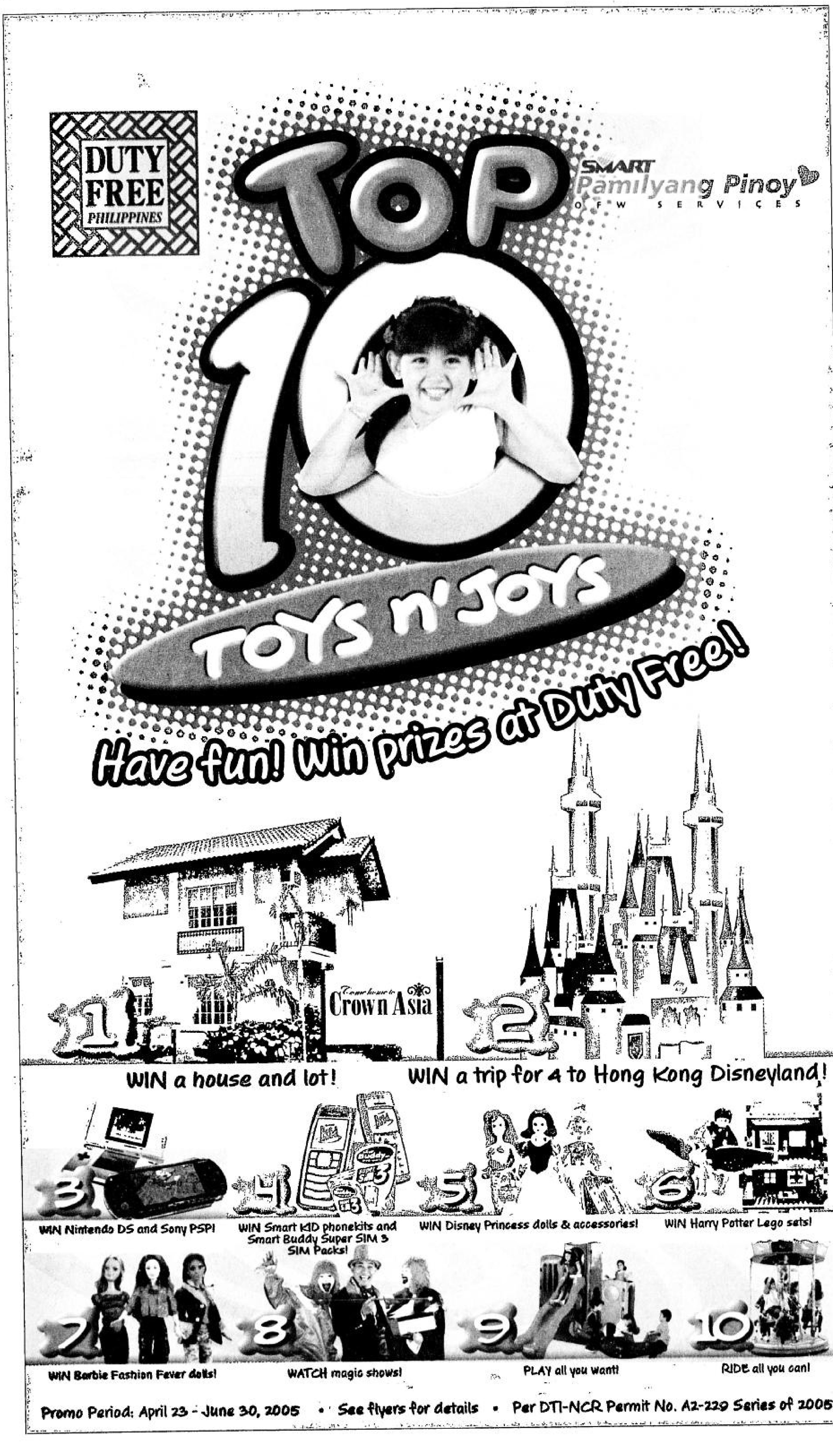
At night, after work, they turned to the music of Beethoven, Chopin, Mozart and Brahms for solace. But Romero wondered: "Is music the only language left untarnished by man? And now I know: given the choice, man would gladly pick up a pistol, not a violin."

While Vallejo retreated to Batangas, the Romero family retreated to a nipa hut in Novaliches some 20 miles north of Manila.

Romero's father joined the guerillas while his brother Ramon did some liaison work.

DEATH/ F3

ERNESTO Vallejo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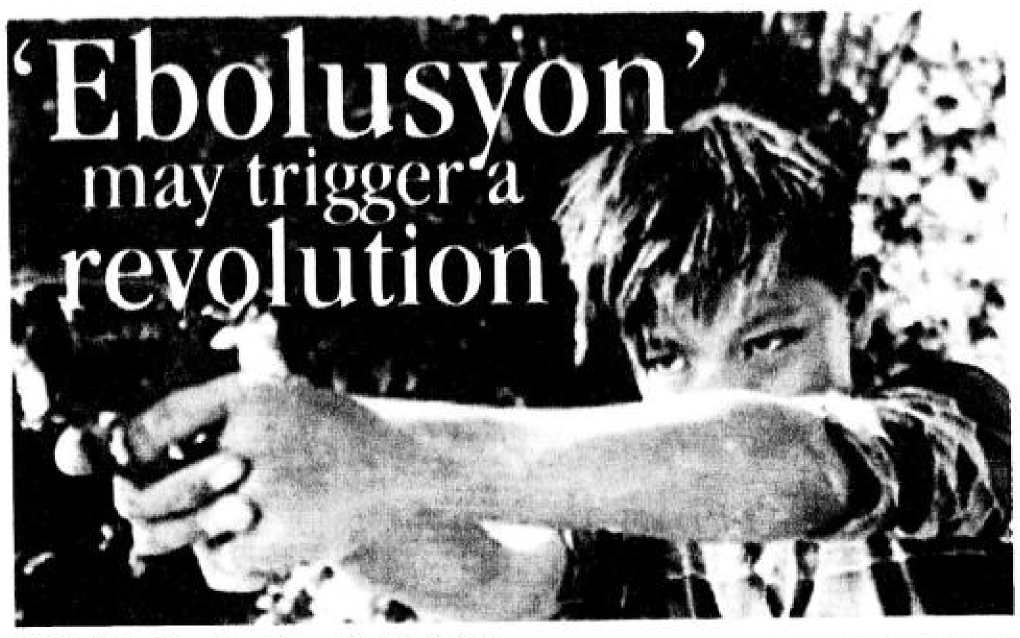


'Ebolusyon' may trigger a revolution

ELRYAN De Vera plays the central character who unites two generations

Nominated for best picture in the 28th Gawad Urian, Lav Diaz's 10-hour movie points the future of Philippine cinema

STORY ON PAGE G3

List of nominees to 28th Gawad Urian

Best Picture

"Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino" (Paul Tanedo, producer), "Milan" (Star Cinema), "Panaghoy sa Suba" (CM Films) and "Sabel" (Regal Entertainment).

Best Director

Lav Diaz ("Ebolusyon"), Joel Lamangan ("Sabel"), Olivia Lamasan ("Milan") and Cesar Montano ("Panaghoy sa Suba")

Best Screenplay

Lav Diaz ("Ebolusyon"), Raymond Lee and Olivia Lamasan ("Milan"), Ricardo Lee ("Sabel") and Cris Vertido ("Panaghoy sa Suba").

Best Actor

Ronnie Lazaro and Pen Medina ("Ebolusyon"), Cesar Montano ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), Piolo Pascual ("Milan"), Yul Servo ("Naglalayag") and Jomari Yllana ("Minsan Pa").

Best Actress

Nora Aunor ("Naglalayag"), Claudine Barretto ("Milan"), Judy Ann Santos ("Sabel") and Vilma Santos ("Mano Po 3: My Love").

Best Supporting Actor

Wendell Ramos ("Sabel"), Roeder ("Ebolusyon"), Dennis Trillo ("Aishite Masu") and Jacky Woo ("Panaghoy sa Suba")

Best Supportimg Actress

Iza Calzado ("Sigaw"), Aleck Bovick ("Naglalayag"), Angie Ferro ("Ebolusyon"), Rebecca Lusterio ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), Ara Mina ("Minsan Pa") and Juliana Palermo ("Panaghoy sa Suba")

Best Cinematography

Larry Manda ("Bahaghari"), Paul Tanedo ("Ebolusyon"), Shayne Clemente ("Milan"), Ely Cruz ("Panaghoy sa Suba") and Ja Tadena ("Pa-siyam")

Best Editing

Jason Cahapay ("Pa-siyam"), Vito Cajili ("Feng Shui"), Marya Ignacio ("Milan") and Renato de Leon ("Panaghoy sa Suba").

Best Production Design

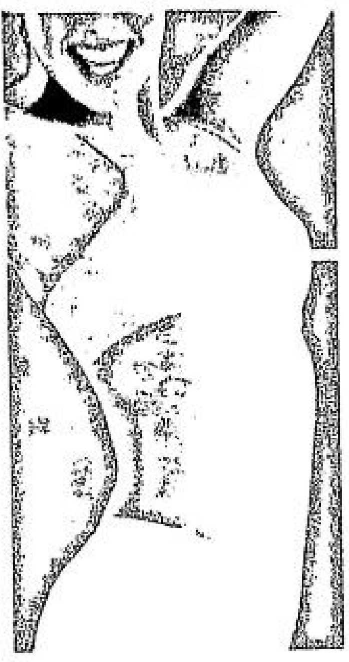
Patty Eustaquio, Rishab and Jun Sabayton ("Ebolusyon"), Allan Leyres and Ron Heritan ("Panaghoy sa Suba") and Richard Somes ("Pa-siyam").

Best Music

Nonong Buencamino ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), Lucien Letaba and Arnel de Pano ("Minsan Pa") and Jesse Lucas ("Sabel")

Best Sound

Albert Michael Idioma ("Feng Shui"), Rafael Luna and Bob Macabenta ("Ebolusyon"), Arnold Reodica ("Sigaw"), Angie Reyes and Nestor Mutia ("Panaghoy sa Suba") and Ramon Reyes ("Pa-siyam")



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Tears?

Platinum albums, hit concerts, screaming fans, TV and movie roles. Sometimes, all these can be overwhelming for a 16-year-old. Yet, Sarah still counts her "Star for a Night" win as the most memorable. After years of seeking out and joining talent shows in every town her parents could take her, like a fairy-tale princess she finally earned her place not through birthright but through patience, hardwork and sacrifice.

Knowing how it feels to get the big break, Sarah has joined the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You, too, can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Sarah, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

For additional information, please call (632) 893.5995 email eyebank1@ultimate.info.com.ph

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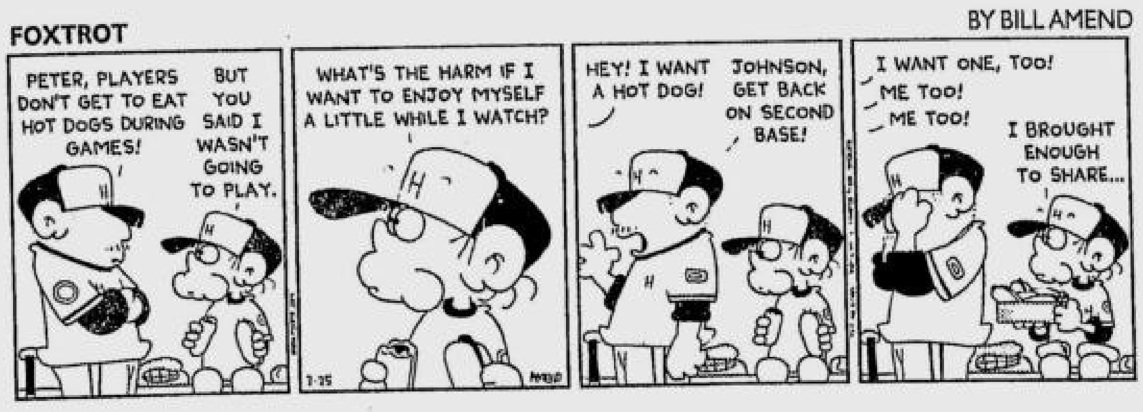
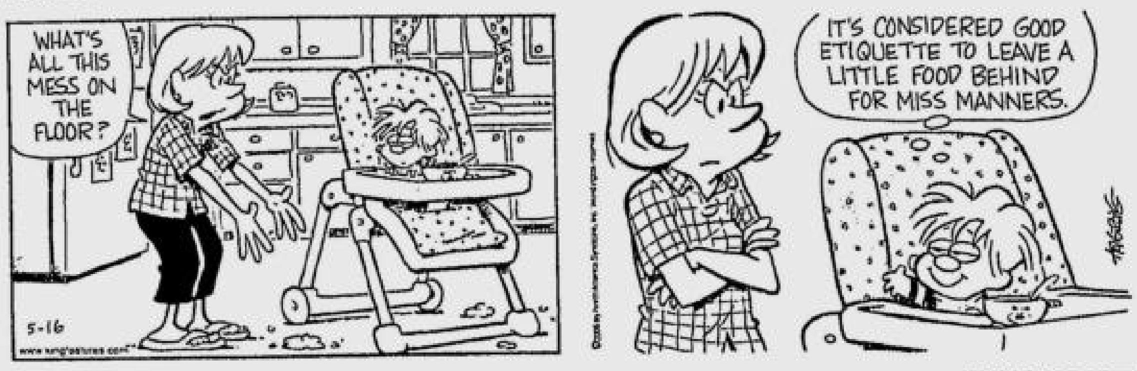

PETER, PLAYERS DON'T GET TO EAT HOT DOGS DURING GAMES!
BUT YOU SAID I WASN'T GOING TO PLAY.
WHAT'S THE HARM IF I WANT TO ENJOY MYSELF A LITTLE WHILE I WATCH?
HEY! I WANT A HOT DOG!
JOHNSON, GET BACK ON SECOND BASE!
I WANT ONE, TOO!
ME TOO!
ME TOO!
I BROUGHT ENOUGH TO SHARE...
7-25

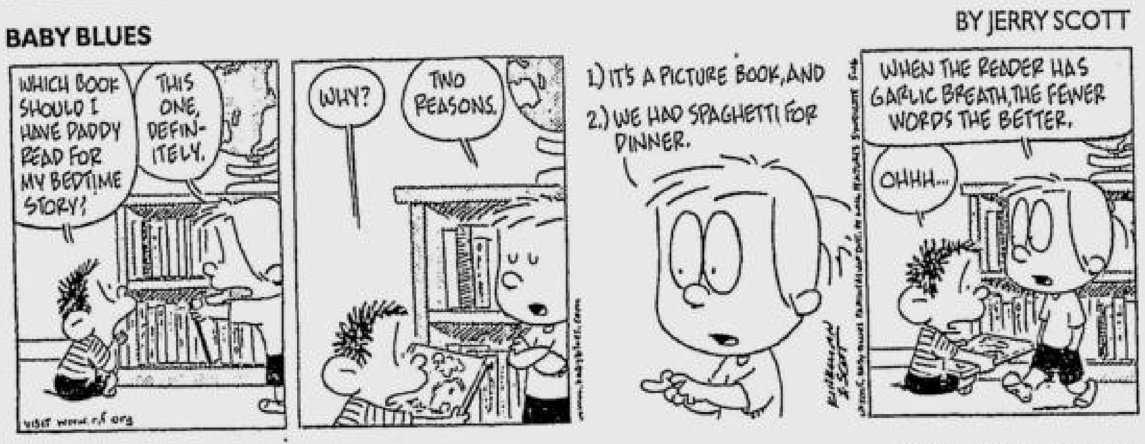
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


WHAT'S ALL THIS MESS ON THE FLOOR?
IT'S CONSIDERED GOOD ETIQUETTE TO LEAVE A LITTLE FOOD BEHIND FOR MISS MANNERS.
5-16

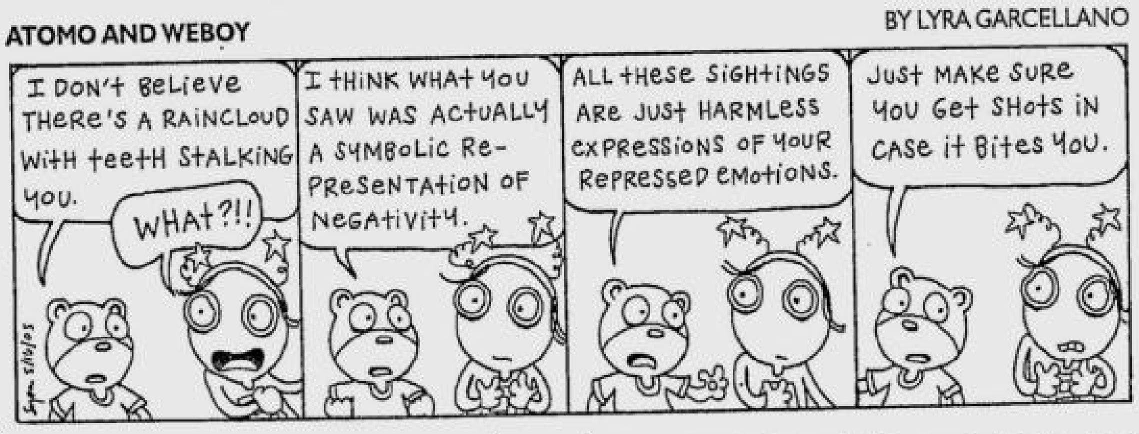
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHICH BOOK SHOULD I HAVE DADDY READ FOR MY BEDTIME STORY?
THIS ONE, DEFINITELY.
WHY?
TWO REASONS.
1.) IT'S A PICTURE BOOK, AND
2.) WE HAD SPAGHETTI FOR DINNER.
WHEN THE READER HAS GARLIC BREATH, THE FEWER WORDS THE BETTER.
OHHH...

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I DON'T BELIEVE THERE'S A RAINCLOUD WITH TEETH STALKING YOU.
WHAT?!!
I THINK WHAT YOU SAW WAS ACTUALLY A SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION OF NEGATIVITY.
ALL THESE SIGHTINGS ARE JUST HARMLESS EXPRESSIONS OF YOUR REPRESSED EMOTIONS.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU GET SHOTS IN CASE IT BITES YOU.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're flamboyant, uninhibited and expressive. Sometimes you're subtle about this; sometimes you're just eccentric. You give considerable thought to your wardrobe. You are soft-spoken and composed. You have a distinctive style and flair. The year ahead is full of exciting, fresh beginnings: a new road.
Birthdate of: Henry Fonda, actor; Studs Terkel, writer/journalist; Pierce Brosnan, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Later today you want to get organized. You're making lists of what you want to do. Try to accomplish a few of your aims, because it will make you feel good.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Around midday today, the Moon changes to Virgo, which is your fellow Earth sign. This bodes well for you. You'll feel relaxed and in control. Enjoy your day!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is an excellent day to putter around your home and do some chores. It's also good for real estate deals. Buy something practical, or something you need for making repairs at home.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a busy day with lots of little loose ends. Just do what you can. Make plans to see friends tomorrow (a very social day!).

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're thinking about money and financial matters today. It's best to do important deals or make significant purchases in the afternoon. Business gets better as the day wears on.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Around midday, the Moon moves into your sign. This gives you an added boost of energy and good fortune. Make plans to advance your career or your reputation. (Tomorrow, you'll shine!)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good day to talk to friends and members of organizations. You can generate interest and enthusiasm for a special project you have in mind. Travel plans are starting to look promising!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today is a good day to talk to friends, and tomorrow is a wonderful day to receive favors from them. Maybe you want to start to butter up somebody? (Plan ahead.)

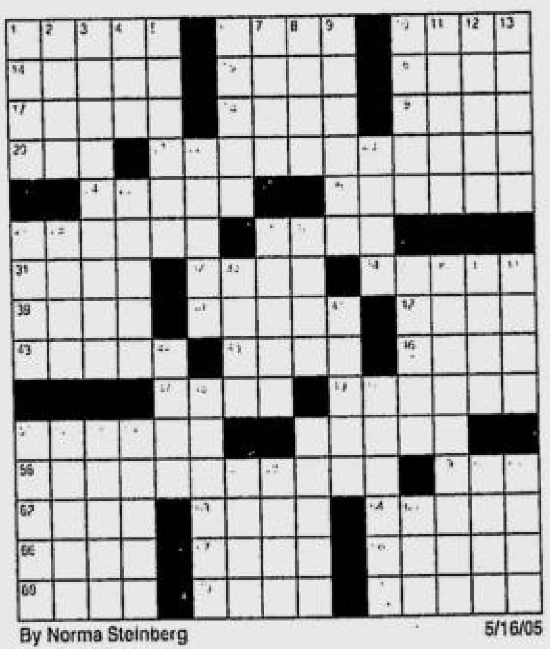
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have a chance to influence others today. For whatever reason, they notice you. Your people skills are definitely hot right now.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good day to deal with shared property and favors or obligations that you owe to others. You can get a lot done today. Work hard to lay the groundwork for tomorrow.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel quite intense about something now. Your passion is running deep. Normally, you're quite objective. Try to maintain your cool today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): By midday, the Moon moves opposite your sign, drawing your attention to close friends and partners. Make plans to entertain at home tomorrow, or to explore potential real estate profits.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

5/16/05

ACROSS
1 Dreadful
6 Bombard
10 Shoo!
14 Cacophony
15 Director Kazan
16 Roll-call answer
17 "M*A*S*H" setting
18 Corner of a church?
19 Land east of the Urals
20 Classified items
21 Of lesser quality
24 Motif
26 Main course
27 Warship assemblage
29 Appendage
31 Burden
32 Statement of self-assurance
34 Writer/singer Leonard
39 Diminutive ending
40 Susan of "All My Children"
42 Skeleton part
43 Thorax
45 Steeped leaves
46 Leave out
47 Ran up a tab
49 Goes too fast
51 Major commodity
55 City on the Arkansas
56 Intense questioning
59 First gear
62 Astronaut Sally
63 Strong wind
64 Type of therapy?
66 Individuals
67 So that's it!
68 Sub finder
69 Untidy state
70 "Lyin' __"
71 Roeper's co-host

DOWN
1 "Diana" singer
2 Natalie of "Gypsy"
3 Captain's aide
4 Function
5 Rented
6 Serenity
7 Ticklish doll
8 Property claim
9 Two-seater
10 "Thou __ not..."
11 Union leader Chavez
12 Crop up
13 Back-comb
22 PC to PC message
23 Cable market news org.
25 Land of the dead
27 One Baldwin
28 Portnoy's penner
29 Pulled strings?
30 Early Peruvian
33 Like a button?
35 Slender woodwinds
36 Culkin movie
37 Author Bagnold
38 Butterfly catchers
41 Question in dispute
44 Snitched
48 Thick-heeled shoe
50 Gladden
51 Sen. Thurmond
52 Biblical pronoun
53 Adjutants
54 Media members
55 Grove parts
57 __ does it
58 Jubilant gaiety
60 Poet Khayyam
61 Viral lump
65 Director Reiner

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

F	A	C	E	D	■	P	A	C	T	■	B	A	T	T
A	C	H	I	E	V	A	B	L	E	■	E	C	H	O
C	H	A	N	C	E	L	L	O	R	■	S	T	E	W
T	E	R	S	E	R	■	E	U	R	A	S	I	A	N
■	■	■	T	I	N	E	■	T	A	L	E	N	T	S
G	R	I	E	V	E	R	S	■	C	A	L	O	H	■
A	E	R	I	E	■	W	I	P	E	S	■	L	I	P
L	I	O	N	■	W	I	N	O	S	■	P	I	C	O
A	N	K	■	P	I	N	K	S	■	S	A	T	A	N
■	S	M	E	A	R	■	S	E	D	A	T	E	L	Y
[illegible]	C	A	M	P	E	L	■	H	I	L	L	■	■	■
P	R	I	M	A	T	E	S	■	S	A	N	D	R	A
R	I	D	E	■	A	L	L	O	C	A	T	I	O	N
A	B	E	T	■	P	H	E	N	O	M	E	N	O	N
Y	E	N	S	■	[illegible]	I	D	E	■	S	E	T	T	O

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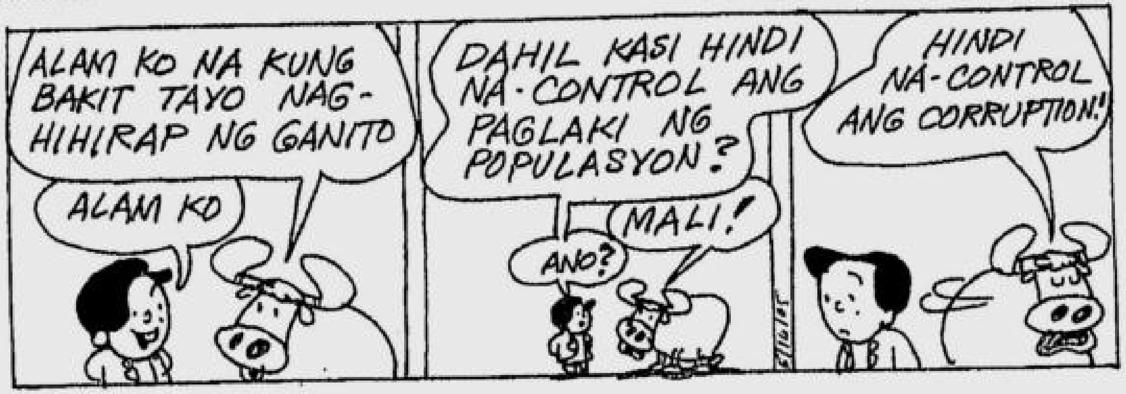
5/16/05

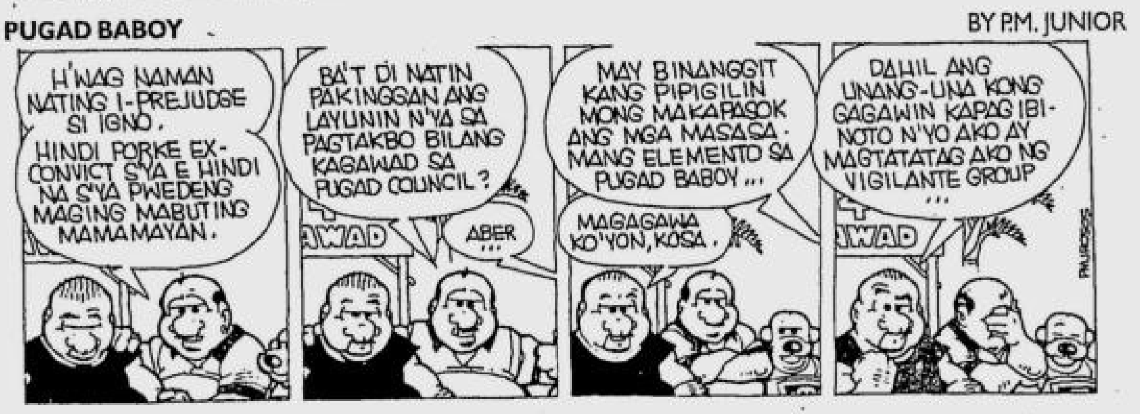
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ALAM KO NA KUNG BAKIT TAYO NAGHIHIRAP NG GANITO
ALAM KO
DAHIL KASI HINDI NA-CONTROL ANG PAGLAKI NG POPULASYON?
ANO?
MALI!
HINDI NA-CONTROL ANG CORRUPTION!

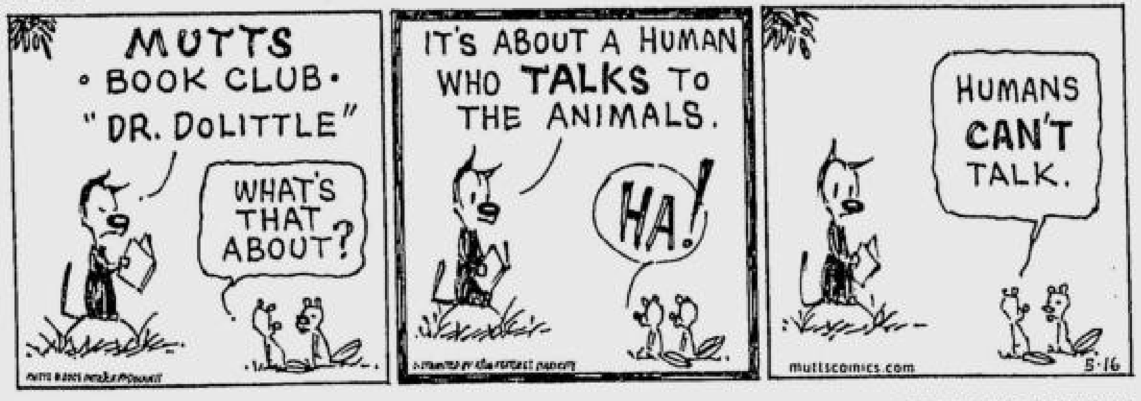
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


H'WAG NAMAN NATING I-PREJUDGE SI IGNO.
HINDI PORKE EX-CONVICT S'YA E HINDI NA S'YA PWEDENG MAGING MABUTING MAMAMAYAN.
BA'T DI NATIN PAKINGGAN ANG LAYUNIN N'YA SA PAGTAKBO BILANG KAGAWAD SA PUGAD COUNCIL?
ABER...
MAY BINANGGIT KANG PIPIGILIN MONG MAKAPASOK ANG MGA MASASAMANG ELEMENTO SA PUGAD BABOY...
MAGAGAWA KO'YON, KOSA.
DAHIL ANG UNANG-UNA KONG GAGAWIN KAPAG IBINOTO N'YO AKO AY MAGTATATAG AKO NG VIGILANTE GROUP...
AWAD

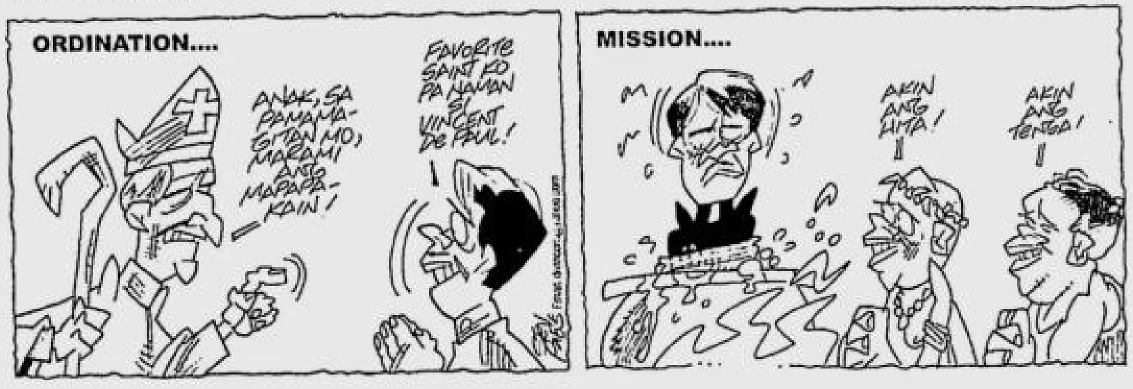
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MUTTS • BOOK CLUB • "DR. DOLITTLE"
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?
IT'S ABOUT A HUMAN WHO TALKS TO THE ANIMALS.
HA!
HUMANS CAN'T TALK.
muttscomics.com
5·16

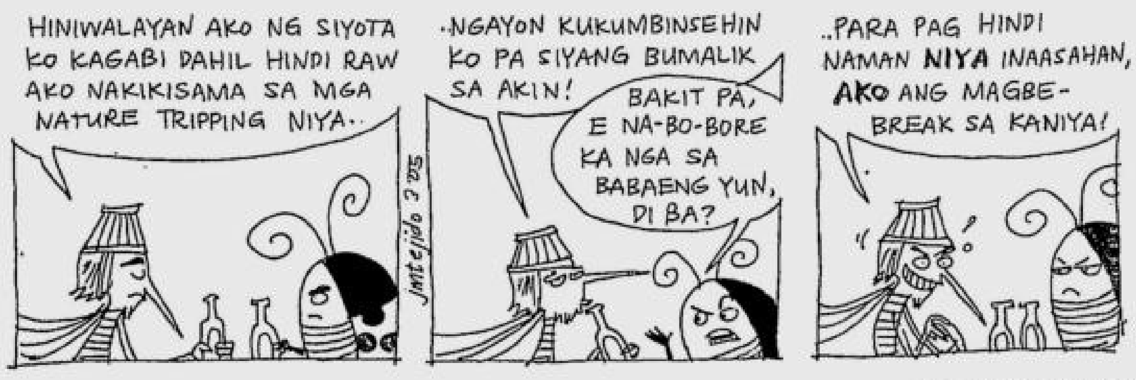
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ORDINATION....
ANAK, SA PAMAMAGITAN MO, MARAMI ANG MAPAPAKAIN!
FAVORITE SAINT KO PA NAMAN SI VINCENT DE PAUL!
MISSION....
AKIN ANG HITA!
AKIN ANG TENGA!

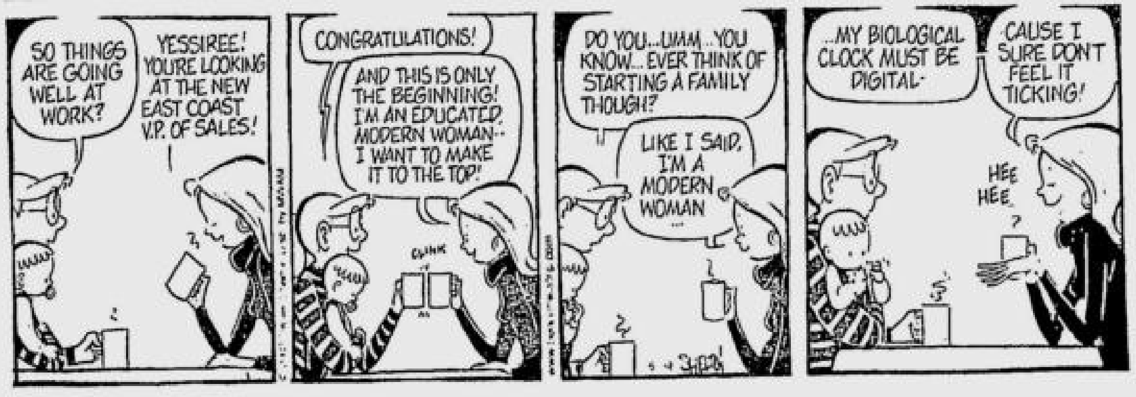
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HINIWALAYAN AKO NG SIYOTA KO KAGABI DAHIL HINDI RAW AKO NAKIKISAMA SA MGA NATURE TRIPPING NIYA..
.NGAYON KUKUMBINSEHIN KO PA SIYANG BUMALIK SA AKIN!
BAKIT PA, E NA-BO-BORE KA NGA SA BABAENG YUN, DI BA?
..PARA PAG HINDI NAMAN NIYA INAASAHAN, AKO ANG MAGBEBREAK SA KANIYA!

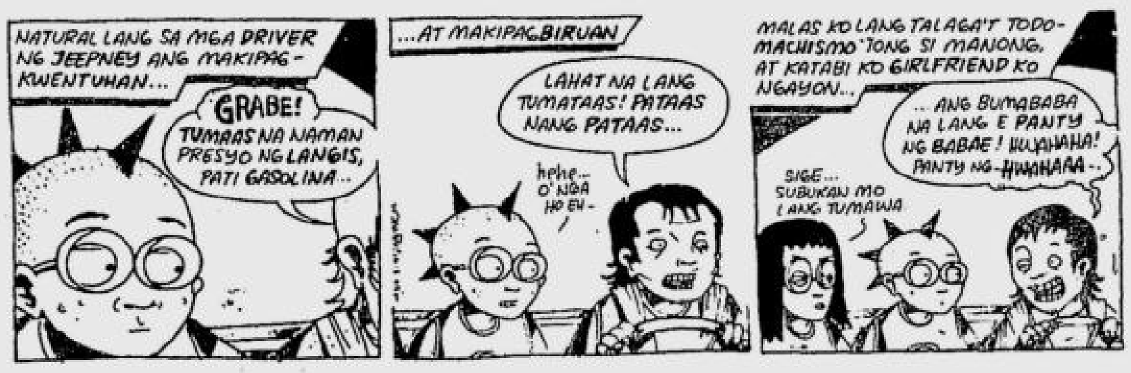
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SO THINGS ARE GOING WELL AT WORK?
YESSIREE! YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE NEW EAST COAST V.P. OF SALES!
CONGRATULATIONS!
AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING! I'M AN EDUCATED, MODERN WOMAN... I WANT TO MAKE IT TO THE TOP!
CLINK
DO YOU...UMM...YOU KNOW... EVER THINK OF STARTING A FAMILY THOUGH?
LIKE I SAID, I'M A MODERN WOMAN
...MY BIOLOGICAL CLOCK MUST BE DIGITAL.
CAUSE I SURE DON'T FEEL IT TICKING!
HEE HEE

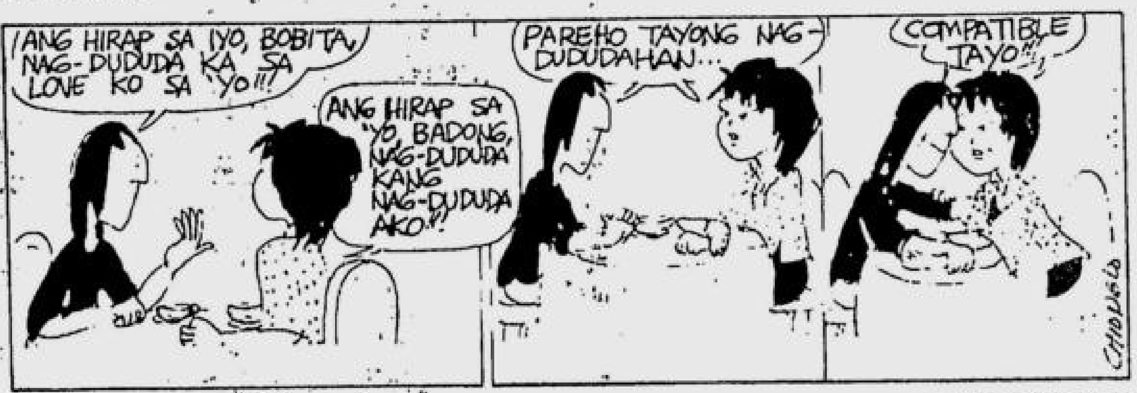
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


NATURAL LANG SA MGA DRIVER NG JEEPNEY ANG MAKIPAG-KWENTUHAN...
GRABE! TUMAAS NA NAMAN PRESYO NG LANGIS, PATI GASOLINA...
...AT MAKIPAGBIRUAN
LAHAT NA LANG TUMATAAS! PATAAS NANG PATAAS...
hehe... O' NGA HO EH-
MALAS KO LANG TALAGA'T TODO-MACHISMO 'TONG SI MANONG. AT KATABI KO GIRLFRIEND KO NGAYON...
... ANG BUMABABA NA LANG E PANTY NG BABAE! WUAHAHA! PANTY NG-HWAHAAA-.
SIGE... SUBUKAN MO LANG TUMAWA

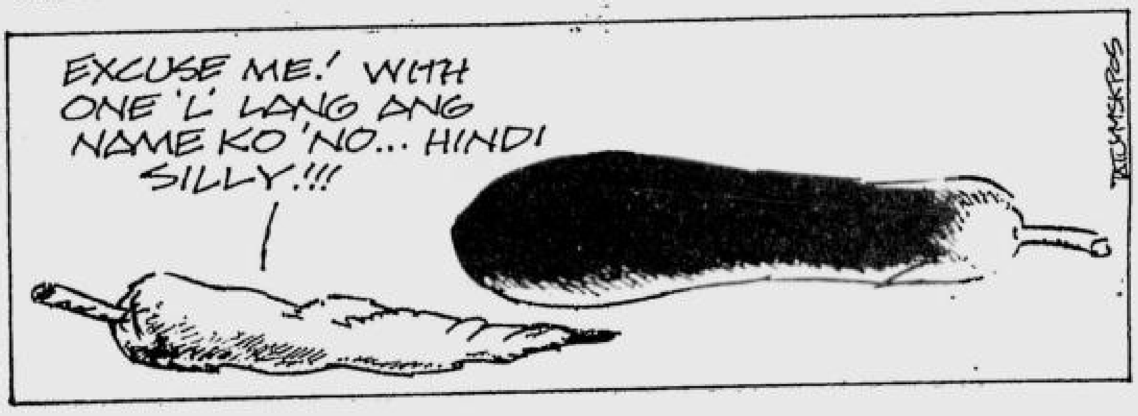
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG HIRAP SA IYO, BOBITA, NAG-DUDUDA KA SA LOVE KO SA 'YO!!
ANG HIRAP SA 'YO, BADONG, NAG-DUDUDA KANG NAG-DUDUDA AKO?!
PAREHO TAYONG NAG-DUDUDAHAN...
COMPATIBLE TAYO!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


EXCUSE ME! WITH ONE 'L' LANG ANG NAME KO 'NO... HINDI SILLY!!!

'Ebolusyon' may trigger a revolution

By Lito B. Zulueta

IN "EBOLUSYON ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino," Raynaldo (Elryan De Vera) is rescued as an infant from abandonment by a mentally unhinged woman, Hilda (Marife Necisito). She takes him back to her family in the countryside, where he grows up to witness and suffer the lot of Filipino farmers: enslavement to the land, getting caught in the crossfire of political conflicts and severe displacement. He flees and joins a mining family in the high lands. In his new world, he discovers that same plaintive reality of loss, suffering and dislodgement.

LAV DIAZ

Thus, the thread that connects "Ebolusyon" from Lav Diaz's previous film, "Batang West Side," is dislocation and bereavement of place. If the Pinoy cop in America is fleeing his twisted past as a torturer in "West Side," Raynaldo represents the victim, the other end of the torture process. The boy rescued from the dumps by a deranged woman represents the derangement inflicted by the warped reality of the Philippines. He won't be like Jacob sold to slavery by his brothers and later exalted in Egypt. When Raynaldo returns to his original foster family toward the end of the movie, he comes full circle. We know his lot has not vastly changed; in fact, his foster sisters bring aid to the communist underground on the sly, just like when he was a boy, his foster uncle (Pen Medina) stole guns from the military and sold them to the communists. But Raynaldo knows there will be no surprises. He will not come unhinged like his beloved Hilda who rescued him from the garbage dump when he was a baby. He will abide by the reality.

Torment and agony

"Ebolusyon" is a powerful movie. Nominated for best picture in the 28th Gawad Urian of the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino, it is a movie that makes us abide by the torment and agony that is Philippine history in the last 30 years. It relives the darkness of martial law, the dilemmas of the Aquino transition and the bedlam that constitutes the present. The movie explains much of the horror, the better for the viewer to confront it.

Of course, some will say that what connects "Ebolusyon" to "West Side" is its swollen, distended limits. While "West Side" is five hours, "Ebolusyon" lasts 10 hours, approximating roughly the time it took for Diaz to finish it—more than nine years.

Thus, the most distinctive aspect of "Ebolusyon" is also the most problematic—its chronological conceit. How could an important movie that is a veritable contemporary Philippine epic be so liberal with its narrative length that it risks losing the audience it seeks to affect and influence?

The answer is that there's so much liberality and comprehensiveness in the vision of Lav Diaz, that the audience can take the calculated risk of sitting through "Ebolusyon," imbibing its spirit that meanders through the alleys and byways of Philippine history, a tortuous path that, to critics of the film, may be reflected in the movie's rather tortuous length.

But "Ebolusyon" is too significant to be dismissed as a movie that takes its title too literally. It is an important contribution to world cinema, signaling both a refusal to be confined to the two-hour limit of commercial cinema and an embrace of the artistic potentials of digital cinema, particularly digital's capacity to release the artist from the servitude and conventions of the studio system.

The latter is perhaps the other distinctive aspect of "Ebolusyon"—the adamant, unabashed adoption of digital cinema, its limits and possibilities. No wonder, Diaz could hardly care about time. Digital knows no time; it just goes on and on. It is a technological stream of consciousness if there was one. It democratizes image-recording. And you know what St. Thomas Aquinas says about democracy: it tends toward anarchy.

It's a technology, too, that creates its audience. Part of the reason Diaz's work is not your ordinary two-hour movie is that it is not one: it hasn't been transferred on celluloid, unlike, for example, Laurice Guillen's "Santa Santita," which was shot on video but transferred on film for commercial release. "Ebolusyon" is therefore not meant to be shown in theaters. It's meant to be seen in video houses, on a more intimate setting perhaps, in episodic fashion probably, like the soap opera that is a funny metaphor that runs through the movie.

No rush

"Ebolusyon" is clearly not for movie marathoners. It is a movie that is not to be seen in a rush. Doing so may make one miss its other conceits. The subplot on the conspiracy to assassinate the filmmaker Lino Brocka for agitating the farmers in the land reform question is one delicious hyperbole. Obviously this is Lav Diaz's tribute to the power of cinema. Or is he lamenting that Brocka did not live long enough to trigger the revolution?

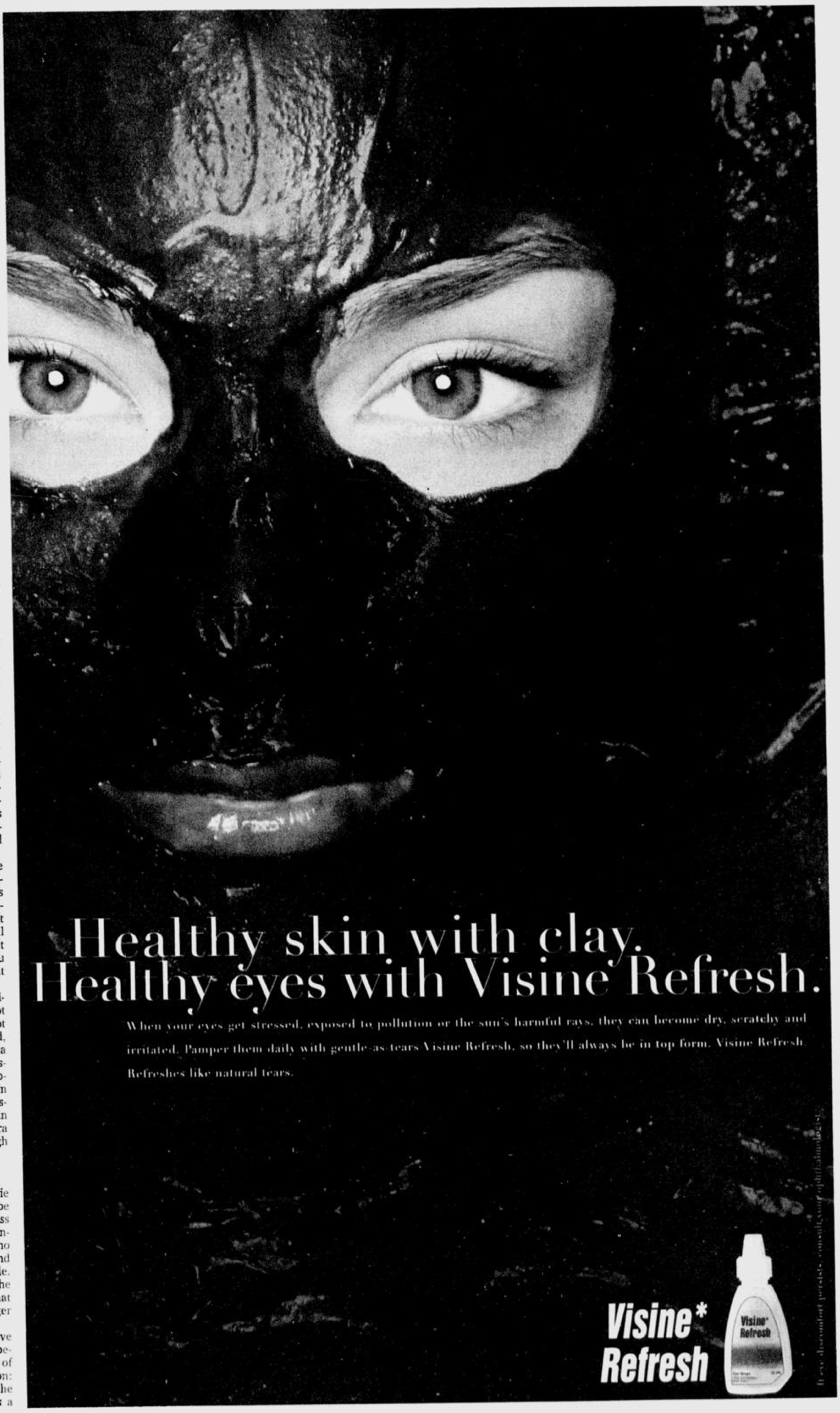
To be sure, some of the film's expansive peregrinations may reach a dead end, especially the rather distended episode of Kadyo (Pen Medina) when he leaves prison: after failing to integrate back to society, he returns to a life of crime and becomes a hired killer, but balks at the prospect of killing Brocka. The conspiracy turns against him, and as he makes his final bloody crawl to his death, we know he has been making the final gasp at life all along. He has been a living dead even without the fatal dagger wound. There's no need to belabor that.

There's also the historical lapse. After Kadyo informs us that he received word about the whereabouts of Raynaldo in 1988, we see him wandering into the Mendiola massacre, which took place in January 1987.

But never mind. "Ebolusyon" is an artistic rarity. A film like this only comes once in 10 years.

The 28th Gawad Urian, the critics' prize for filmmaking excellence will be handed out in colorful ceremonies on June 4 at the AFP Theater in Quezon City. Produced by the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino and APT Productions, the awards will be televised on GMA-7.

"EBOLUSYON" strikingly recasts the role of women.



When your eyes get stressed, exposed to pollution or the sun's harmful rays, they can become dry, scratchy and irritated. Pamper them daily with gentle-as-tears Visine Refresh, so they'll always be in top form. Visine Refresh. Refreshes like natural tears.

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